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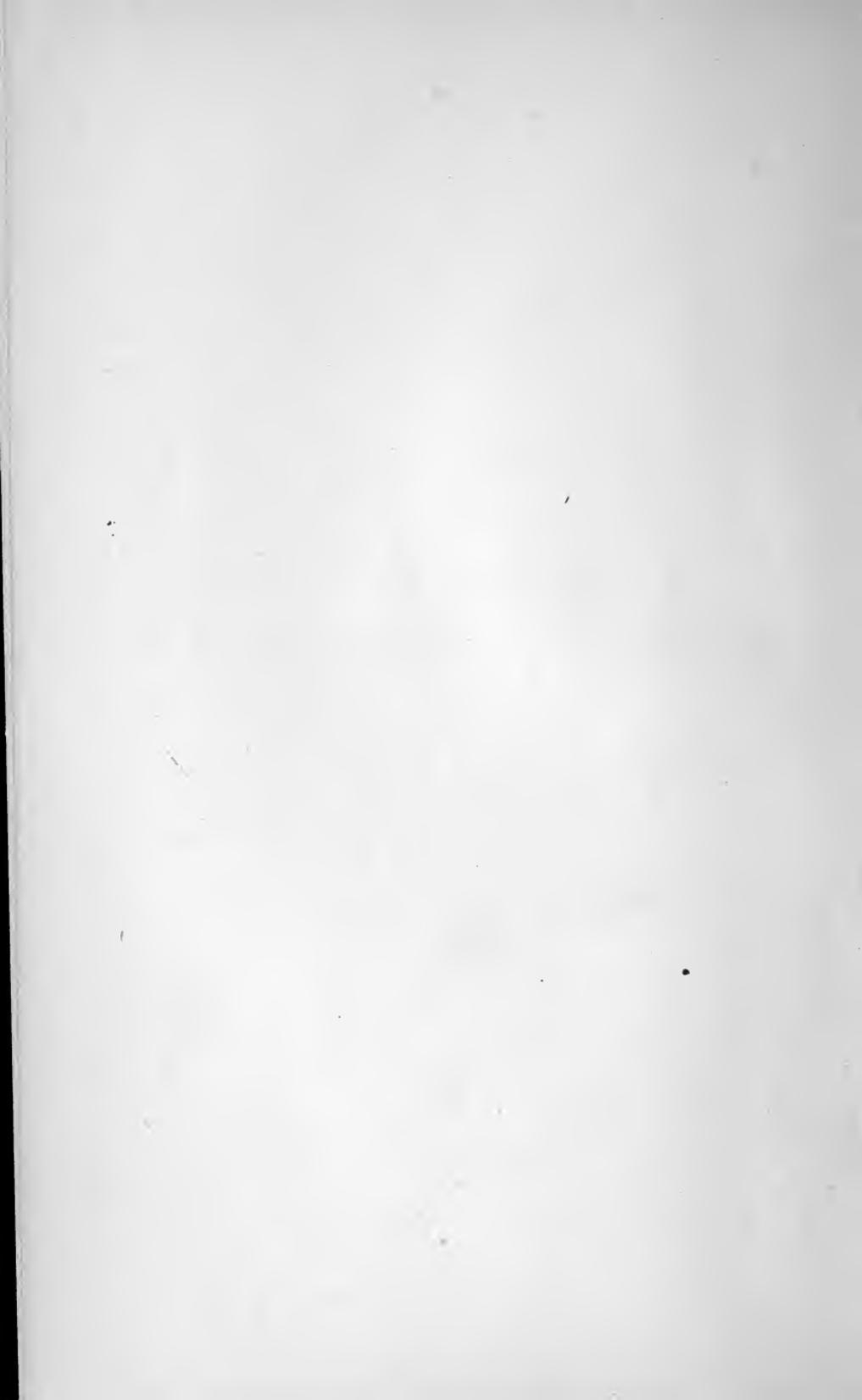
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HUMAN DESTINY
IN THE LIGHT OF REVELATION

HUMAN DESTINY IN THE LIGHT OF REVELATION

BY

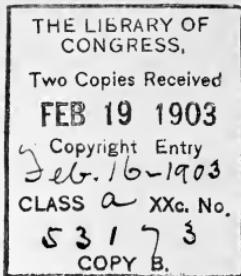
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“THE WAY: THE NATURE AND
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PREFACE

THE teaching of Revelation concerning man's ultimate destiny is not vague or inconclusive, though it has sometimes been made to appear so through metaphysical interpretations; systems of thought have arisen by this means which from time to time have been accorded a certain sanction or authority. But it is now widely recognized that such systems of metaphysical definition cannot be final as statements of truth, since they must ever be subject to critical revision with the progress of mind; the changes or modifications to which they have been subject in the past are an indication of what must follow in the future as truth is gradually freed from error.

Some recent attempts have been made to forecast the destiny of man by the light of modern science, and in this light it may

perhaps be possible to form a reasonable, though necessarily vague, conjecture as to what may be the nature of that perfected earthly state of man toward which all the higher activities of the present life appear gradually to tend. But of that ultimate destiny of the human soul which lies beyond the horizon of this world, Science supplies no data whatever upon which a conclusion may rest ; concerning that which transcends the boundaries of the earthly life Revelation alone supplies the key. It has been the aim in this treatise, therefore, to adhere strictly to the teaching of those original scriptures which affirm a revelation of human destiny by "the word of prophecy" and as manifested in the person of "Jesus, the Christ."

I am not aware that this exclusive aim, of ascertaining the destiny of man by the light of Revelation, has hitherto been attempted, except incidentally, with reference to some less single purpose and in a fragmentary form. The prophecies bearing on

this subject have had a profound significance for devout minds in all ages, but the teaching of the scriptures with reference to man's moral redemption has had a tendency to place the revelation of his ultimate spiritual future in a remote and shadowy background.

While a release from the conditions of sin is the first and most pressing need in the life of the individual, the supreme note of joy which finds emphasis in the scriptures is based upon the revelation of "Life and Immortality," including the manifestation of this in its ultimate form in the person of the Messiah. Few, comparatively, realize how full and complete and perfect is the revelation of human destiny. Many imagine that the knowledge of this is withheld from man; that nothing is known, or can be known, of man's ultimate future; while some would affirm that a veil should be drawn over that future lest the activities of the present be hindered by the contemplation of that which apparently is remote and unsubstantial.

But Revelation presents another view: it emphasizes the fact that the knowledge of human destiny, once realized in the consciousness, is a potent influence affecting the life and thought of man, transfiguring the darkest features of the present and stimulating aspiration and joy. From the earliest (Gen. xvii: 1-5) to the latest prophecies (Rev. xxi: 1-8), it appears to be the aim of Revelation to bring to the human consciousness a full knowledge of the divine purpose and ultimate end in the creation of man, and to make this knowledge a reward of faith and a means of drawing the human soul onward and upward to the fulfillment of its destiny.

The advanced thought of the time, in many converging lines, is earnestly seeking light on the nature and destiny of man by the aid and methods of modern Science; this gives to the study of Revelation, in this connection, a peculiar interest and significance, which it has been the aim of this treatise to present. And as no one order

of truth stands unrelated to other forms of knowledge in the human mind, Nature and Spirit have been discriminated in Part I., in the light of Science and Revelation, as an introduction to Part II., which treats exclusively of the Destiny of man as revealed in Christ. When the reader reflects upon the vastness of the theme and the extent of the ground traversed, he will apprehend that only an outline was possible within the limits of one small volume ; but with this outline in mind the study of Revelation will disclose with far greater fullness the truths emphasized in this brief statement.



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PART I
NATURE AND SPIRIT

“ Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” — JOHN iii: 3-6.

“ The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a live-giving spirit. Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; then that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthly: the second man is of heaven.” — I CORINTHIANS xv: 45-47. (R. V.)

NATURE AND SPIRIT

SCIENCE AND REVELATION

I

IT is affirmed as a fundamental truth of Revelation that God is spiritual or *supra*-natural Being, that he is over all his works, and that he has variously revealed himself to man, but more specifically through what is designated his “word.” It may likewise be affirmed as a fundamental premise that spiritual or *supra*-natural Being, to be known as such, must be supernaturally revealed ; not necessarily in the form of miracle, so-called, but through the manifestation of that which constitutes the *supra*-natural principle or “ substance ” of that Being — which the scripture affirms is “ Spirit.”¹ A “ mani-

¹ John iv : 24. (R. V., margin.)

festation of the Spirit”¹ is therefore the self-revelation of God, — the disclosure of that which is above or behind Nature.

II

The discoveries of Science and the course of human events are sometimes designated “revelations,” the term being freely applied to whatever pertains to human enlightenment; but in its scriptural sense this term has a more restricted meaning as implied in the words: “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.”²

Likewise the term “Science” may signify all that pertains to exact knowledge, of whatever kind; but as commonly understood it refers more specifically to the knowledge of Nature, and it is in this sense that the term will be used in this treatise. Science and Revelation therefore, as these terms are herein used, have a distinction in their

¹ 1 Cor. xii: 7.

² Heb. i: 12.

methods and aims which it may be well to define as a premise. Science may direct the astronomer to point his telescope to a quarter of the heaven where a hitherto unknown planet will become visible at a specified time. The certainty of the fulfillment of this prediction is due to the fact that the presence of such an unseen body has been ascertained through certain disturbances observed in the movement of some known body, the cause of which has been mathematically determined. This is not properly a revelation, but a discovery ; and it is important to mark the distinction between the enlightenment that is due to the observation of Nature, and the enlightenment derived through a revelation of the Spirit.¹

III

For Revelation, in the scriptural sense, implies an order of enlightenment differing from the common, as manifested in “the sure word of prophecy,” of which means

¹ Gal. i: 11, 12.

the scripture affirms that “no prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost.”¹

As thus defined the enlightenment derived through Revelation differs from the acquisitions of Science according to the distinctions in their respective sources of light.

Jesus said, “The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father’s who sent me.”² . . .

“The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.”³ This distinction is further emphasized by the apostle Paul as follows : “My speech and my teaching,” he said, “was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. . . . We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory ; which none of the

¹ 2 Peter i: 19-21. (R. V.) ² John xiv: 24. (R. V.)

³ John vi: 63.

princes of this world knew”¹— or, which was unknown to the philosophies of man.²

Thus the wisdom acquired in the course of Nature the apostle designates “man’s wisdom,” by virtue of its being an acquisition of the human mind through the use of man’s intellect; but “a demonstration of the Spirit and of power” he designates “the wisdom of God.”³

IV

In the light of the knowledge that all things are fundamentally of divine origin, the wisdom derivable from Nature is likewise the wisdom of God — but in a secondary sense. For Nature is an organic expression of the mind of a Creator; man’s last discovery through the observation of Nature is natural law. The wisdom derivable from Nature is therefore a result of the mediation of natural law, and natural law differs from “a demonstration of the

¹ 1 Cor. ii: 4-8.

² Matt. xiii: 35; Rom. xvi: 25, 26.

³ 1 Cor. i: 23, 24.

“Spirit” as the creation differs from its originating and sustaining Cause. For the laws of Nature are not more truly God than are the products of these laws : they do not reveal “the Spirit of God” in a primary sense, as God is revealed in “his word” or in “his Christ.” While, therefore, a creator and sustainer of the universe may be inferred from the observation of Nature, even to “his eternal power and Godhead,”¹ as the maker of all things, God is known as to his spiritual Fatherhood by Revelation ; for in “a demonstration of the Spirit”² God himself is present in the manifestation in a primary sense. Thus are Science and Revelation clearly distinguishable as of two orders of “wisdom,” proceeding respectively from Nature and Spirit.

V

Revelation affirms that “God is Spirit ;”³ and as already stated Spirit is *supra*-natural,

¹ Rom. i : 20.

² 1 Cor. ii : 4.

³ John iv : 24. (R. V., margin.)

— above or behind Nature. The most ancient symbol of Revelation affirms figuratively that “the Spirit of God moved” in originating a creative act;¹ then followed, in the light of Science, an order of Nature through which were formed the universe and man.

For Science has already demonstrated the truth that creation is by natural law; and while this “order of Nature,” so-called, proceeds forth from God — of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things² — the originating cause, or divine immanence, which is Spirit, is not discernible in Nature as to his essential Being. It is an ancient question, “Canst thou by searching find out God?”³ The most acute scientific scrutiny fails to discover anything back of natural law, though it belongs to the necessities of human thought to infer an intelligent First Cause.

In the last analysis, therefore, Science resolves the order of Nature into a system of

¹ Gen. i: 1, 2.

² Rom. xi: 36.

³ Job xi: 7.

laws, a correlation of forces — impersonal, comprehensive, immutable — which form, differentiate, and apparently explain all natural phenomena of the physical and mental realms. The existence of the *supra*-natural, therefore, is not demonstrable by Science, but through a revelation of the Spirit;¹ and in a revelation of the Spirit, God himself, who alone is *supra*-natural, breaks forth,² as it were, through his creation and is manifested in and through the soul of man, the scripture affirming that “the tabernacle of God is with men.”³

¹ 1 Cor. ii: 4, 5. ² Exod. xix: 22. ³ Rev. xxi: 3.

NATURE AND THE SUPRA-
NATURAL

I

A "demonstration of the Spirit" is therefore the self-revelation of God, in and through the soul of man. But so long as man is wholly of the order of Nature, the scripture affirms he is incapable of discerning "the things of the Spirit of God."¹ The apostle Paul says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God : for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."² And it is a fundamental teaching of Christ's gospel that "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . Except a man be born . . . of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."³ For Nature is ap-

¹ 1 Cor. ii: 11.

² 1 Cor. ii: 14.

³ John iii: 3-10.

prehended by that which is natural, and Spirit is apprehended by that which is spiritual; like discerns like. That which is born in the order of Nature is natural, and that which is "born of the Spirit" is spiritual or divine.¹ Therefore Jesus said, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."²

For as formed in the order of Nature man is a "creature;"³ the scripture says he is made of the elements of the earth:⁴ and it is likewise affirmed that this creation is not consummated⁵ in man until he is endowed with the Spirit, or "born of God."⁶

This teaching of Christ and his apostle, through the distinctions and issues that flow thence, will be found to be fundamental in the revelation of human destiny.

¹ John iii: 6.

² John iii: 7.

³ Rom. viii: 19.

⁴ Gen. ii: 7.

⁵ Rom. viii: 11.

⁶ 1 John iv: 7-9.

II

If man received this spiritual endowment in the course of Nature it would have been needless to say that he "must be born again," that he must be "born of the Spirit." The teaching of Jesus likewise has reference to the freedom of the individual human will to accept or reject this "gift of God."¹ Except a man (the individual soul) be born of the Spirit, he cannot "see," or "enter," the kingdom of God.

For "the kingdom of God" is a spiritual as distinguished from a natural realm, wherein "the things pertaining to God" are spiritually discerned, without a veiling.² The scripture affirms that it is not until man is "born of the Spirit" that he is "born of God," or becomes a son of God: "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God; even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of

¹ John iv: 10; Rom. vi: 23.

² 2 Cor. iii: 14-16.

the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”¹

While, therefore, in the order of Nature, and by the light of Science, man may vaguely discern a divinity in an inferred first cause, or in a power which upholds the universe, God is known as to his spiritual Fatherhood through some other form of knowledge. Jesus said, “No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him:”² and “no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”³

III

The revelation of God as Spirit is therefore in a sense distinct from his revelation in Nature as the creator and sustainer of the universe. And in order that man may discern “the things of the Spirit of God”⁴ the scripture affirms he “must be born

¹ John i:13.

² Matt. xi:27.

³ John xiv:6.

⁴ 1 Cor. ii:14.

anew.”¹ To them that were entering upon this divine inheritance the scripture says, emphasizing a distinction of the spiritual and the natural in the order of the soul’s life, “The things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God. But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God ; that we might know the things that are freely given to us by God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth ; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”²

In the light of this teaching the enlightenment that comes of Nature and the enlightenment which comes of Spirit are in a sense distinct. One order of wisdom relates to that which is created, formed, made, and to the mind thence derived ; while the other relates to God himself, or to that which is “begotten of God.” They who are born of the Spirit are said to be “taught

¹ John iii: 7. (R. V.)

² 1 Cor. ii: 11-13. (R. V.)

of God ; ”¹ for when man has become spiritual-minded² God then guides and counsels man Spirit to spirit, by an inward communion that is spiritual or divine.³ When one of the disciples of Jesus first manifested this spiritual enlightenment the Master said, “Blessed art thou . . . for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.”⁴ The disciple was blessed because of his spiritual discernment as well as in the special revelation that was made to him. And it is upon this spiritual order of apprehension, through the

¹ John vi: 45.

² Rom. viii: 6-11.

³ Faculties are developed and various orders of mind formed according to the nature of the sustained impulse given to thought through observation and reflection. The “natural mind” is formed through the observation of natural things, and to the extent of its knowledge its accretions constitute an image of the natural world. In like manner, when inspired by the Spirit, a distinct order of observation and reflection, pertaining to spiritual things, forms the spiritual mind, or “man :” and these two orders of mind differ according to the distinctions existing in their objects of thought.

⁴ Matt. xvi: 17.

birth of a spiritual consciousness in man, that Christ declared he would build his church¹ or found his "kingdom," — a kingdom of the Spirit, "the kingdom of God."

¹ Matt. xvi: 18.

THE CREATION OF MAN

I

BUT while “the natural man,” or natural mind — by which is meant the mind that is formed exclusively in the order of Nature — as the scripture says, “receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God,”¹ it has its own proper function to exercise in the discernment of that which is natural. When it is affirmed in the parable that “the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light,”² a general truth is implied; namely, that wisdom on any given plane has reference to the things pertaining to that plane; and while Nature is apprehended naturally, Spirit is apprehended spiritually, — like discerns like: therefore the scripture says spiritual things are “spiritually discerned.”³

¹ 1 Cor. ii: 14.

² Luke xvi: 8.

³ 1 Cor. ii: 14.

That which engaged the mind of Newton in his *Principia* and that which filled the mind of Paul in his Epistles are not of one and the same order of truth, though fundamentally both orders of truth are alike of divine origin. But the truths of Nature and the truths of Spirit are, respectively, with reference to natural and spiritual realms. Science is now affirming "the unity of Nature," while Revelation affirms "the unity of the Spirit;"¹ and these unities agree in one only in the end and consummation of human destiny, when God will be "all in all."²

II

In so far, therefore, as Nature has ministered to the creation of man Science is the interpreter of the process, and Science is gradually explaining this order of creation through the discovery of natural law. As thus explained — in so far as the scientific mind is warranted in forming a conclusion

¹ Eph. iv: 3, 4; 1 Cor. vi: 17.

² 1 Cor. xv: 28.

from the ascertained facts — man is an organic creature “formed” through evolution and development. Science, as already affirmed, is only cognizant of that which is natural — the *supra*-natural “Spirit” is not included in her categories. Every form and function of the human organism, apparently every faculty of mind — as the forming of these in the order of Nature is gradually reduced to knowledge — attests man’s relationship to subordinate organisms, and these in turn to lower or more rudimentary forms of life. For in the light of Science an order is found to prevail throughout Nature which links the latest developments with the initial stages of creation, and the forming of “man” apparently is included in this order. Though Science has by no means solved the problem of man’s ascent in the order of Nature, the results of modern research already suggest the inference that natural law preserves an unbroken order, or chain of sequence, which connects the latest with the earliest stages of creation.

III

Through the discrimination of genera and species, through the development of faculties and functions, there seems to have been, in the light of Science, a gradual rising from simpler to more complex organisms, from lower to higher forms of life, until in "man" the physical organism apparently reached its final stage of development. Thence on there follows an evolution of the mind and the moral sense which differentiates "man" from all subordinate, antecedent forms of life, and apparently has no bounds of limitation. As the struggle between the various races of man becomes more and more dependent upon intellectual and moral qualities, the dominance of physical force gradually yields, though with exceeding slowness, to these higher powers pertaining to the soul. Hence when the physical organism attained its final development in man, the evolution of his psychic powers, as expressed in mind, continued on independent of any

further change of the bodily form ; for there is “no indication that Nature tends to the production of any higher organism than that of man.” While, therefore, in all living creatures subordinate to man the physical organism appears to have set a limit to their psychic development,— as determined by their mental range or intelligence,— when the human stage was reached, thence on there followed a seemingly independent evolution of the mind and the moral sense, which became a distinguishing human characteristic, separating man, through these higher attributes of the soul, from all that subordinate creation which Revelation figuratively designates in its totality “the dust of the ground,” of which the scripture affirms “man is made.”¹

¹ Gen. ii: 7.

THE ORDER OF CREATION

I

THUS the results of modern scientific research appear to agree with this symbol of Revelation as to man's origin and natural descent, or with respect to the forming of his natural mind and organism. The process of man's creation in the order of Nature is gradually being explained through the discovery of natural laws ; which natural agencies Revelation symbolizes by the anthropomorphic figure, "the work of mine hands" ¹— the laws of Nature being regarded as an instrumentality.

Revelation, having another end in view than that of supernaturally informing man with reference to the natural history of creation, merely outlines this figuratively, in a few far-reaching all-inclusive symbols, in Genesis, as a foundation upon which

¹ Isa. xxix : 23.

it was divinely purposed "in the fulness of time"¹—as discerned in the light of the New Testament—to base a revelation of the Spirit through Jesus Christ,² when man was qualified to receive this divine gift.

The "Spirit of prophecy" reveals nothing which man may discover of himself by the use of his intellect, for it is by searching out the truths of Nature, in the widest sense, that man's intellect is formed; and to supernaturally reveal this natural order of truth would have an injurious effect upon the human mind by depriving it of a proper exercise of its own natural faculties in their development. The reference Revelation makes to the order of a natural creation is therefore merely a figurative or symbolic outline, indicating the divine immanence in the creative act, with special reference to what was to follow when "the divine nature"³ should be imparted to man through Jesus Christ.

¹ Gal. iv: 4. ² Rom. xvi: 25. ³ 2 Peter i: 4.

II

By the light of Science the inference may now be drawn that all the activities of Nature tended from the beginning toward that final consummation which is expressed in "man;" and the scripture intimates as much when it affirms that a "Saviour of men" was "foreordained before the foundation of the world."¹ In the light of this revelation the divine purpose is made known from the beginning; namely, that the creation and salvation of "man" was in mind before this world came into existence.

The scripture figuratively affirms that it was not until "man was made" that the divinity "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul."² Referring to the "natural man" as distinguished from that spiritual manhood revealed in Christ, the apostle Paul says: "The first man Adam became a living soul; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

¹ 1 Peter i: 20.

² Gen. ii: 7.

Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; then that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthly: the second man is of heaven. . . . And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”¹ By his use of the present tense—“the first man is,” etc.—the apostle implies that this order of creation is common to all men; “first the natural; afterward, then that which is spiritual.”²

For the making of man, in the light of this teaching, was not an act consummated in a remote past, but is still in process in the life of the individual, as implied in the words of Christ, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.”³ . . . “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.”⁴ For it is through Christ that the Father imparts his own Spirit individually to man, that man may become “a living soul”⁵—that is, a soul quickened

¹ 1 Cor. xv: 45-49. (R. V.)

² A. V.

³ John v: 17. ⁴ John iv: 34. ⁵ Gen. ii: 7.

by the indwelling “Spirit of God ;” and the sign of the consummation of this divine act in the creation of man was when the risen Christ breathed on his disciples and said, “Receive ye the Holy Spirit”¹— a symbol, or sign, of that subconscious spiritual experience which is common to his followers through all time.

¹ John xx : 22.

TEMPORAL AND ETERNAL LIFE

I

IN its ever-widening sphere of knowledge Science indicates a gradual advance in human progress in the earthly life — morally, intellectually, and materially ; but concerning that ultimate destiny of the human soul which transcends this present stage of life, Science is necessarily silent, for Nature holds no revelation of this. In the light of Nature the individual man seemingly emerges into existence at his birth and sinks into oblivion at his death — the momentous question of his immortal future remaining unsolved. But by the revelation in Jesus Christ life and immortality are brought to light¹ in a comprehensive “demonstration”² of the truth by actual manifestation. This revelation in the Christ

¹ 2 Tim. i: 10.

² 1 Cor. ii: 4.

is *supra*-natural in one sense, by its “revelation of the Spirit ;”¹ and *præter*-natural in another sense, by its manifestation of “the Son of man in heaven ;”² in whom, the apostle Paul says, “dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead, bodily”³ — for where “man” is, in bodily form, there is necessarily a natural environment corresponding to that organism, however sublimated or spiritualized : “Nature” not as known to man in a physical world, but as known to the angels in heaven.

II

The scripture affirms, in substance, that the travail of the whole creation “in pain together,” in bringing forth man, was “until now,” or until in the fulness of time “God sent forth his Son” into the world⁴ to redeem the human soul from that earthly environment incidental to its creation on the plane of Nature, and to reveal and im-

¹ 1 Cor. xii : 7.

² John iii : 13.

³ Col. ii : 9.

⁴ Gal. iv. 3-5

part the Spirit to man. Concerning this travail of "the whole creation," when compared with that destiny which is reserved for man, the apostle Paul says, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us : for the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God."¹ Hereby a distinction is clearly drawn between "the creature"—the man that is made—and man when he is "born of God." And there is added this further revelation : "The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but we ourselves which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body."²

¹ Rom. viii: 18, 19.

² Rom. viii: 21-23.

III

For through the imparting of the divine Spirit to man, as outwardly symbolized by its descent upon Jesus "like a dove,"¹ that which was created in the order of Nature is eventually merged, "by adoption,"² into that divine sonship which is spiritual and eternal. In the light of Revelation, therefore, it is plain that man was not created a child of God in the order of Nature; for it is said that "the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God"—that is, for that new birth, "of the Spirit," which implants in man "the divine nature";³ or, as it is figuratively expressed in Genesis, when the Deity "breathed into man the breath of life." It is not until man is morally prepared that he is endowed with the divine Spirit and becomes a son of God.⁴ For the apostle Paul speaks of those followers of Christ who with him had "received

¹ John i: 32.

² Rom. viii: 23.

³ 2 Peter i: 4.

⁴ John i: 12.

the first-fruits of the Spirit," as waiting for this imparted Spirit to redeem the whole "creature," body and mind — to bring the whole "natural man" "into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

IV

It is through the presence of that indwelling Spirit imparted from the Father — prophetically symbolized by the Creator's "breathing into man the breath of life"¹ — that man is spiritually conformed to the "image" and "likeness" of God² when made a partaker of the divine nature.³ Whether, therefore, "perfect man," made "in the image" and "likeness of God," is discernible in "the Adam" of the Edenic symbol, or in Jesus, the Christ, is according to a literal or a spiritual reading of the scripture — as to whether that ancient symbol refers to a special historic progenitor of the human family of this

¹ Gen. ii : 7.

² Gen. i : 26.

³ 2 Peter i : 4. (R. V.)

earth, or to the *genus homo*, filling all worlds and "the heaven of heavens"—of whom the sole perfect type known to this earthly family of man is he who designated himself "the Son of man which is in heaven."¹

¹ John iii: 13.

THE SYMBOLS OF GENESIS

I

READ in the light of the New Testament, a key to the general trend of Revelation may be found in the symbols of Genesis. Prophecy employs parables and symbolic figures to express spiritual or divine truths ; through these simple and familiar forms, pertaining to the mind of the time, the Spirit prophesies in advance of man's natural understanding. Jehovah said, "I have used similitudes by the ministry of the prophets ;" ¹ and Jesus gave as a reason for his use of parable in speaking to "the multitude," "That seeing they shall see, and shall not perceive ; and hearing they shall hear, and shall not understand" ²— until by searching the word and pondering it in the heart the truth gradually

¹ Hos. xii : 10.

² Matt. xiii : 14.

dawns in an awakened spiritual consciousness. The symbols of Genesis have therefore a deeper spiritual significance than is usually accorded them in the light of Nature, wherein they are sometimes viewed as merely mythical fragments, or conjectures, expressive of the groping of the mind of the ancient world in its speculative search for the genesis of things.

II

Discerned in the light of the New Testament, the two narratives of creation included in Genesis — known as the Elohist and the Jahvist narratives — are respectively symbols of spiritual and natural creations. The first may be said to refer to what, in the language of Jesus, "the Father himself doeth;" and the second to what "the Son also doeth in like manner,"¹ — for the scripture says, God "created all things by Jesus Christ."² The Elohist symbol, which refers to the work of "God

¹ John v: 19. (R. V.)

² Eph. iii: 9.

Almighty,"¹ implies a perfected spiritual creation, not in time; while the Jahvist symbol, which affirms the work of the "Lord God," refers to a creation in time, and in the order of Nature—a creation in which the natural man is "formed."

Again, the Elohist symbol refers to a spiritual creation in which all things in their order are affirmed to be "good :" "God (Elohim) said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion . . . over all the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. . . . And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. . . . Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them."²

This symbol refers to a perfected creation, and to perfect man—a creation consummated in a spiritual realm, or "kingdom of God." It implies an eternal creation,

¹ Exod. vi: 3.

² Gen. i: 26-ii: 1.

not in time, for the "man" referred to in the plural is celestial or perfect man, the *genus homo*, filling the "heaven of heavens" as sons of God :¹ of whom Jesus, the Christ, according to the scripture, is a representative,— "one chosen out of the people."² For, as discerned in Christ, the Elohist creation is a spiritual man, made in the "image" and "likeness" of God;³ "perfect man, of the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;"⁴ who himself is said to be "in the form of God,"⁵ "the very image of his substance"⁶ — which the Elohist symbol likewise affirms of man; namely, that he is made in the "image" and "likeness" of God.

III

But the figures of the Jahvist symbol imply another order of creation, in time, and in the order of Nature; in other words, this symbol refers to the creation of the human

¹ Job xxxviii: 7.

² Psa. lxxxix: 19-28; 1 Peter ii: 4.

³ Gen. i: 26. ⁴ Eph. iv: 13. ⁵ Phil. ii: 6.

⁶ Heb. i: 3; Col. i: 15.

family of this earth on the plane of Nature ; and this, according to the apostle Paul, is an initial stage of creation, as implied in the words “first the natural ;” afterward, “then that which is spiritual ; the first man is of the earth, earthy ; the second man is of heaven. . . . As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”¹

The forming of man, according to the Jahvist symbol, is continued on throughout the Old Testament dispensation ; the record being first symbolical and then historical — from Abraham onward — until, under the New Testament dispensation, man is finally endowed with the Spirit through Jesus Christ, “who breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Spirit.”²

This Jahvist, or natural creation, in time, is thus prefigured in Genesis : “These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God (Jahveh) made the earth

¹ Cor. xv : 46-49. (R. V.)

² John xx : 22.

and the heavens. . . . And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul : ”¹ that is, a soul indwelt by the Spirit of God.

The earthly, or “natural man,” formed by Jahveh, Lord God, “of the dust of the ground,” is not affirmed to be made in the image and likeness of God. For this preliminary forming of man in the order of Nature is what the apostle Paul designates “the creature ;” and the scripture says, “the first man Adam became a living soul ; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.”² This last is discerned in Christ, who is affirmed to be “the first-fruits of them that slept,”³ “the firstborn among many brethren,”⁴ “the Adam” of a new or spiritual creation which is consummated in a heavenly realm, or “kingdom of God,” wherein all things, according to the Elohist symbol, are affirmed to be “very good,” and the

¹ Gen. ii : 4-7.

² 1 Cor. xv : 45. (R. V.)

³ 1 Cor. xv : 20.

⁴ Rom. viii : 29.

whole creation and the "hosts" of heaven are pronounced "finished."

IV

Concerning these two orders of creation, the natural and the spiritual, the Old Testament deals with the former and the New Testament with the latter — as foretold in the Apocalypse of "a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away."¹ And likewise the New Testament treats of a "new man,"² "born of the Spirit,"³ "born of God,"⁴ of whom Jesus is affirmed to be "the first-begotten."⁵

It is with the natural, or Jahvist creation, in time, that Science is concerned; for in the Jahvist symbol it is said of man, "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."⁶

¹ Rev. xxi: 1.

² Col. iii: 10.

³ John iii: 6.

⁴ 1 John iii: 9; iv: 7; v: 4.

⁵ Heb. i: 6.

⁶ Gen. iii: 19.

The Edenic man, according to the Jahnist symbol, is therefore not a heavenly creation ; the "garden of delights" does not symbolize heaven ; it is not a spiritual but a natural paradise, from the innocence of which man falls away in the order of his forming process, or for the implanting of a moral sense in him through the knowledge of good and evil : "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil ;" ¹ that is, the implanting of a moral principle in man through the knowledge of right and wrong made him godlike.

V

In the Elohist symbol "man" and "earth" and "heaven" are terms used in a generic sense ; the "earth" stands for the physical universe, "heaven" stands for the celestial "heaven of heavens," and "man" stands for the *genus homo*, "perfect man," as revealed in Christ. And these generic terms of the Elohist symbol

¹ Gen. iii : 22.

stand for a perfected, or "finished," creation, coeternal with God; "beginning" only in the sense that it eternally originates with God, but really, as a whole, without beginning and without ending; for it is impossible to conceive of a time when the Eternal was inactive, or when his divine creations were not.

But the Jahvist symbol refers to a special creative act begun and ending in time—a creation formed through one who termed himself "the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending"¹—the Creator and Saviour of this special earthly family of man, Jesus Christ, by whom "the world was made."²

¹ Rev. i: 8.

² John i: 10.

THE COSMOGONY OF GENESIS

I

MODERN science having enlarged man's conceptions, an eternal and universal cosmic order may now be discerned as coincident with the eternal and universal Being of God. And the cosmogony of Genesis, so far as this is expressed in time-symbols — or so far as a time-meaning may be applied to the phrase, "In the beginning" — refers to a special creative act in an eternal and universal cosmic order, to the creation of a special system of "worlds" which had its beginning and will have its ending in time, while the universe remains ; the whole surviving the decay of the parts, being eternally renewed by a ceaseless creation of new systems and new worlds which appear and disappear in a permanent cosmic order that is eternal with God. For this eternal

and universal cosmic order, termed "Nature," — the eternity of which, as will be shown in Part II, is revealed in "the Son of man in heaven,"¹ — is coincident with the ceaseless revelation of the eternal and universal Being of God.

II

The words, "In the beginning," therefore, as employed in Genesis, do not refer to the origin of creative activity on the part of the Supreme Being — whose creative activity is coeternal with his own nature — but in the Elohist symbol this expression refers to the origin of all creative activity as centred in "the Spirit of God;" while in the Jahvist symbol the words, "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God (Jahveh) made the earth and the heavens,"² have reference to a special creative act begun and ending in time. To suppose it otherwise in the light of modern

¹ Matt. xxiv: 30.

² Gen. ii: 4.

acquisitions would be like adhering to the Ptolemaic theory of the universe after the conceptions of the mind had once been enlightened by the discoveries of modern astronomy. For a time-thought is no more applicable to the origin of the cosmos, or to the origin of Nature, than it is applicable to the origin of the Godhead ; for to imagine a time when the divinity was inactive is as unreasonable as to imagine a time when eternity began.

THE PROCESS OF FORMING MAN

I

THAT Science has wrested from Nature a momentous truth by the discovery of a general law of evolution affirming the unity of Nature, is apparent when its bearing on Revelation is discerned, disclosing as it does the process by which "man is made of the dust of the ground"—as to his natural constitution and organic life. When the Jews boasted of their natural descent from Abraham, John the Baptist replied, "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham,"¹ and Science is verifying the statement.

For in the light of modern scientific discovery, as well as in the light of Revelation, man is formed of the elements of the earth. Up to the time of his receiving the

¹ Matt. iii : 9.

Spirit through Jesus Christ, man is a “creature” formed in the order of Nature; and as thus “formed” he is related to a far-reaching series of antecedent life, the totality of which is symbolized in Genesis by the expression, man is “made of the dust of the ground.”¹

II

The distinction between that which is natural and that which is spiritual in man is a teaching of Christ’s (concerning man’s birth of the Spirit) which the apostle Paul elaborates as a fundamental truth in the revelation of human destiny. The scriptures refer to the whole “natural man,” body and mind, as an “earthen vessel;”² and this figure is insisted on when it is affirmed by prophecy, with reference to a future pouring out of the Spirit³ upon man, “They shall be filled like bowls:”⁴ while to this pouring out of the Spirit “upon all

¹ Gen. ii: 7.

² 2 Cor. iv: 7.

³ Joel ii: 28; Acts ii: 17.

⁴ Zech. ix: 15.

flesh" the New Testament makes further reference as the fulfillment of that ancient prophecy through Jesus Christ.¹ When, therefore, the scripture says, "He remembereth that we are dust,"² it is upon this earth-born creature, "the natural man," formed by the "hand" of God³—to use an anthropomorphic figure of speech—that the Eternal Father purposes to bestow his own Spirit when the individual human soul is morally prepared and man willingly opens his heart to receive the divine gift: "Fear not, Abraham: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward."⁴ God himself is the reward of the faithful; for he purposes to impart his own Spirit to man, to make men "partakers of the divine nature."⁵ And that ancient prophecy concerning the imparting of the Spirit to man, which God communicated to Abraham, was first fulfilled on this earth in Jesus Christ, and is

¹ Isa. xliv: 3; Joel ii: 28, 29; Acts ii: 17, 18.

² Psa. ciii: 14.

³ Isa: lxiv: 8.

⁴ Gen. xv: 1.

⁵ 2 Peter i: 4.

being fulfilled in his followers through all time.

But this imparted Spirit, with which man is endowed as a final act in his creation, always remains the Father's ; for it is written, "If God gather to himself his Spirit and his breath, all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust ;"¹ that is, to the state of that earth-born "creature" which in its totality is so designated by Revelation.²

¹ Job xxxiv : 14, 15.

² Psa. ciii : 14.

MAN'S NATURAL ASCENT.

I

THE term "flesh," as used in the scriptures, stands for the whole "natural man," body and mind; and the expression, "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,"¹ is the promise of that consummation of the divine purpose in creating man. This final act, as already stated, is accomplished through Jesus Christ, who is himself declared to be the "first-fruits,"² "the first-begotten,"³ the "first-born among many brethren."⁴

Jesus therefore but voices his own experience when he says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."⁵ He thus refers to a divine order, in the creation of man, which is of a dual nature—to that

¹ Acts ii: 17. ² 1 Cor. xv: 20. ³ Heb. i: 6.

⁴ Rom. viii: 29. ⁵ John iii: 6.

which Science teaches is "formed" through natural law, and to that which Revelation affirms is "born of God." For, in order that man may partake of "the fruit of the Spirit"¹—or, as it is expressed in the symbol of Genesis and referred to again by the glorified Christ,² in order that man may "eat of the fruit of the tree of life"³—the scripture says he "must be born again," he must be "born of the Spirit," he must be "born of God." God is immanent in Nature in a creative sense, but not strictly in an indwelling sense; of man alone is it affirmed that he is God's "temple,"⁴ or "tabernacle"—"a house not made with hands," destined to become "eternal in the heavens."⁵

II

The term "flesh," therefore, in its larger sense, as employed in Revelation, signifies the whole earth-formed man, body and mind, the unquickened "natural man" in every

¹ Gal. v: 22.

² Rev. ii: 7.

³ Gen. iii: 22.

⁴ 1 Cor. iii: 16.

⁵ 2 Cor. v: 1.

soul — all that is below the Spirit when imparted from God. For in the flesh, and in the mind thereby formed, inheres all the instincts of Nature, and to the making of this marvelous organic "creature" the whole earth has contributed. Flesh, in a physical sense, may be said to be the last and highest organic form of "matter," so-called, and is capable of manifesting mind as its perfect organ of expression. In the nourishment of physical life the vegetable feeds on the mineral, the animal on the vegetable, and finally the animal on the animal — and man is no exception. Through physical descent instincts and propensities are transmitted from generation to generation, and heredity implies that mental traits are likewise so transmitted. Thus in "the natural man" in every human soul there inheres a persistent and seemingly indestructible deposit of all that antecedent life, with its instincts, aptitudes, passions, and propensities, transmitted through physical and psychical descent in the forming of that or-

ganic "creature" which eventually became "man;" and thence on this is persistently transmitted in man, apparently without abatement—unless restrained by the moral sense—"from generation to generation." All that has been separately formed through subordinate organisms apparently is comprised in the soul and organism of man; thus man is capable of apprehending all of Nature, because all of Nature has been employed in the creation of man. For Nature's method of building up organisms, of discriminating genera and species, of implanting instincts, of developing faculties and forming "mind," is all a process of making man; "everything tended from the beginning to this end," and the man of this earth is still standing in the workshop a witness of the operation, which is still going on.

III

For in the light of the general tendency of modern scientific discovery the forming of man appears to have involved a continu-

ous and selective activity which traversed the whole realm of Nature from the dawn of creation, through vast astronomical, geological, and biological periods, until the end was attained and "man was made." And as an indication of the divine purpose that was behind this vast stretch of creative energy, the scripture affirms that Christ was "foreordained" to be the Saviour of men "before the foundation of the world."¹ That is, the prophecy implies that before the creation of this world was begun, the forming of "man" was the divine purpose, and Christ was "preordained" to redeem the human soul from its earthly environment — or from the conditions incidental to its creation on the plane of Nature — and to endow it with that divine life of the Spirit through which man is brought into "fellowship" with God as a divine son.² Christ delivers the created human soul from the "bondage" of that which is temporal by imparting to it that which is eter-

¹ 1 Peter i: 20.

² 1 John i: 3.

nal, when that which was formed in Nature is "born of God."

To repeat, therefore: Christ was ordained to "finish" the Father's work; Jesus said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work;"¹ and to this end — for the consummation of the divine purpose in creating man — he likewise said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."²

¹ John iv: 34.

² John v: 17.

THE TRAVAL OF NATURE

I

IN view of that transcendent future reserved for man, as revealed in Christ — “of whose fulness,” says the apostle, “have all we received”¹—it is important to know, by the light of both Science and Revelation, what it has cost to “form man of the dust of the ground.” That is, to use an anthropomorphic figure of speech, it is important to know what infinite pains and patience have been bestowed upon the forming of an organic “creature” whose destiny it is, when quickened by the Spirit, to image the Deity and manifest forth the divine love and wisdom as witnessed in Christ. For that Christ’s indwelling divine “fulness” is man’s inheritance is clearly implied in the apostle’s prayer, “That ye might be filled with all the fulness of

¹ John i:16.

God ;”¹ and in the light of Christ’s revelation of human destiny it is inconceivable that anything less than a far-reaching antecedent preparation — a process of creation exhausting all the resources of Nature so far as this world is concerned — would have sufficed to accomplish the fulfillment of so sublime an end ; namely, that of making man “in the image” and “likeness” of God when he is grown to the fullness of the stature of that spiritual manhood revealed in Christ.

II

Nature and Spirit, therefore, as thus discriminated, do not reveal the same order of truth ; for Science is concerned with that which is temporal, while Revelation is concerned with that which is eternal. The distinction between the things which engage, respectively, the natural and spiritual perceptions in man is marked by the apostle Paul in these words : “ We look not at the

¹ Eph. iii : 19.

things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen ; for the things which are seen are temporal ; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”¹ One order of truth has reference to a natural creation, while the other has reference to a spiritual consummation. The man that is formed exclusively in the course of Nature is but half made ; whatever be his earthly attainments he is still far below the estate of “perfect man, of the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”² For Nature and Spirit are coördinated in “perfect man,” in whom the human and the divine are in perfect “agreement” of will and life—in perfect “fellowship.” But in the order of man’s creation the natural precedes the spiritual, as affirmed by the scripture, “That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural ; then that which is spiritual.”³ “Perfect man,” therefore, is not merely a perfected natural

¹ 2 Cor. iv : 18.

² Eph. iv : 13.

³ 1 Cor. xv : 46. (R. V.)

creation, but that natural creation endowed with the Spirit of God,¹ with the “fulness” and perfection that is manifested in Christ.

III

The symbols of Genesis and the experience of the prophets indicate that previous to the coming of the Messiah — in whom “dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead, bodily”² — man was divinely approached through instrumentalities other than those pertaining to an inward spiritual consciousness. The “ministry of angels” and “prophets” was in a degree exceptional and arbitrary, looking forward to the time when the Spirit should “no longer strive with man,”³ but be “poured out upon all flesh ;” or when, by an interior means, the human and the divine would eventually come into perfect agreement of will and life and be in perfect “fellowship.” As already stated,

¹ Gal. iii : 2, 3.

² Col. ii : 9. (R. V.)

³ Gen. vi : 3.

Jesus was the first on this earth in whom this indwelling of the Father's Spirit was manifested; and in him as "perfect man" this indwelling Spirit is revealed in all its divine fullness and power.

But Jesus is careful to discriminate that which "abode" in him¹ from that which constitutes his own human *proprium*; for he said, "I can of mine own self do nothing."² . . . "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."³ He thus distinguishes between his human *ego*, his "own self," and that indwelling Spirit, which is God; and the scripture is careful not to confuse the two natures, the human and the divine. For however closely allied in Christ are these two natures, they nevertheless remain eternally distinct and separable, though coördinated in "perfect fellowship" in "perfect man."

¹ John i: 32.

² John v: 30.

³ John xiv: 10.

IV

To those who antagonized his revelation of the Spirit Jesus said, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world."¹ Herein a distinction is clearly drawn between the earthly man and the heavenly: one is formed "from beneath," and the other is "from above;" one is born of Nature, while the other is born of Spirit; and Jesus marks the distinction with the precision of an axiom of Science. For in the order of creation the "natural man"² is the preliminary work of Jahveh, "Lord God," who is none other than the Son of God—"Before me there was no God formed;"³ while the "spiritual man" is the "finished" work of Eloi, "God Almighty,"⁴ who is designated in the New Testament "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."⁵

Of the natural man the scripture says

¹ John viii: 23. ² 1 Cor. ii: 14. ³ Isa. xliii: 10.

⁴ Exod. vi: 3.

⁵ Eph. i: 3.

he is “of the earth, earthly, and speaketh of the earth ; ”¹ that is, even his very thought is thence derived ; but when “born of the Spirit ” man is “taught of God,”² by a spiritual communion, and is become an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.³

¹ John iii : 31. ² John vi : 45. ³ Matt. xxv : 34.

THE EDENIC MAN

IN the order of man's creation, according to the Jahvist symbol, the Edenic state is representative of that unconscious innocence of the childhood of man, knowing not good or evil. "Eden," therefore, stands for that innocent but uninformed natural state of the soul before a moral sense has been implanted in man through "the knowledge of good and evil." For it is through the knowledge of good and evil, or the sense of right and wrong, that man becomes a moral being; then he becomes godlike: "The Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil;"¹ this was said of "the Adam" in the Jahvist symbol, after he had "eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."

That innocent but negative Edenic state,

¹ Gen. iii: 22.

therefore, in which every child coming into the world lingers until a perception of right and wrong is awakened through "the knowledge of good and evil," is not the state of "perfect man ;" the perfect state is not revealed in the natural Adam, but in Christ,¹ when the innocence of ignorance eventually is replaced by the purified conscious knowledge of all things.² For the man that is "made of the dust of the ground" — the Edenic Adam — is empty of all that is characteristic of the man that is "born of God," as discerned in Christ. That heaven-born man, the scripture says, was made "perfect through sufferings ;"³ he "learned obedience by the things which he suffered ; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him :"⁴ who says to his brethren of this world, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as

¹ Eph. iv: 13.

² 1 Cor. ii: 10.

³ Heb. ii: 10.

⁴ Heb. v: 9.

I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”¹ . . . “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God”²—of which the Edenic Adam in the Jahvist symbol was not a partaker.

For it is through Christ— who by the power of the Spirit overcame the world in himself, even as his followers must likewise overcome the world in themselves—that man is baptized “with the Holy Ghost and with fire;”³ that is, with “the Spirit of God.” The natural man in every soul, therefore, in the Edenic state, may be *nigh* to God in the unconscious innocence of that state—even as Jesus said of little children, “Their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven;”⁴ but in the Edenic state man is not *of* God in the sense of being “born of the Spirit”—he is not yet “become” a partaker of the

¹ Rev. iii: 21.

² Rev. ii: 7.

³ Matt. iii: 11.

⁴ Matt. xviii: 10.

divine nature;¹ he is not yet given "to eat of the tree of life," to which end he must first become a moral being through the knowledge of good and evil, by which means he is made capable of distinguishing between right and wrong.

¹ 2 Peter i: 4.

MORAL AND SPIRITUAL STATES

I

THE distinction between a moral and a spiritual consciousness was first revealed when Jesus said of John the Baptist, "This is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."¹ And Jesus adds this significant revelation: "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached."²

In the mind of Christ "the law and the prophets"—which are representative of a moral dispensation—are distinguished from that "kingdom of God" which signi-

¹ Matt. xi: 10, 11.

² Luke xvi: 16.

fies a spiritual or divine realm. This teaching of Jesus concerning John is rooted in a fundamental principle of his gospel; namely, that "man must be born of the Spirit." John the Baptist was strictly a moral man, practically sinless; and yet Jesus implies that he was not yet "of the kingdom of God;" for he said the least of them that are of the kingdom of God are "greater than he." For the moral sense is not spiritual — it is rooted in obedience to "law;" and this order of righteousness is that of "a servant;" but "the kingdom of God" is spiritual, wherein "love is the fulfilling of the law,"¹ and the servant has become "a son." (1 John iv: 7, 8.)

II

The implanting of a moral sense in man is the consummation of a natural creation;² and in John, who is affirmed to have been greater than the prophets,³ this order of righteousness was fulfilled. The scripture

¹ Rom. xiii: 10. ² Rom. ii: 14. ³ Luke vii: 26.

says, Jesus came to be baptized of John,¹ saying, "For thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."² Thence on, after the descent of the Spirit upon Jesus, the ministry of Christ reveals a spiritual realm, or "kingdom of God," which is likewise termed "the kingdom of heaven :" a state of "life" wherein divinity itself "abides" in the human soul. It is not merely in a natural sense, therefore, but in a larger spiritual sense, which includes the natural, that the scripture says, "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."³

When Jesus affirmed that "the law and the prophets were until John," and "since that time the kingdom of God is preached,"⁴ his teaching evinced a wholly new departure in Revelation, a wholly new truth was then first revealed to man. Christ does not stand in the line of the prophets as of the same order of righteousness ; he even

¹ Matt. iii : 13.

² Matt. iii : 15.

³ 1 Cor. xv : 49.

⁴ Luke xvi : 16.

affirmed that John was "much more than a prophet"¹— one sent from God to prepare the way² of the Lord.

III

John's ministry, therefore, was for the arousing of a moral sense in the individual; for the baptism of "repentance from dead works"³ must precede in every soul that baptism of "the Holy Ghost and of fire"⁴ which is by Jesus Christ. For man can have no experience of a realm of Spirit, or "kingdom of God," except a moral sense be first awakened in him; and as it was with respect to God's dealing with "a people" in the order of Revelation, so is it with his dealing with every individual soul — a moral dispensation must precede the spiritual, and Christ marks this distinction when he discriminates between the righteousness of "the law and the prophets" and "the kingdom of God."

¹ Matt. xi:9. (R. V.)

² Matt. iii:3.

³ Heb. vi:1, 2.

⁴ Matt. iii:11.

IV

What then, in the light of Revelation, is this "kingdom of God" if it is not "of the law and the prophets"? if it is not of the righteousness of moral conduct as witnessed in John? The teaching of Jesus is — and the truth may only be discerned as manifested in Christ, in whom the distinction is so marked that it has ever had a tendency to separate Jesus from his "brethren" — that the kingdom of God is a spiritual or divine realm, wherein the moral law is "fulfilled" in the very Being and Presence of God; a "kingdom of peace" wherein there is no consciousness of moral restraint, no sense of obligation or of obedience; wherein every thought and word and deed is the free and joyful prompting and expression of spontaneous love; a state wherein all is affirmative of the freedom of the Spirit,¹ of the joyous consciousness of God's indwelling Presence in the soul; a state wherein

¹ 2 Cor. iii: 17.

God and man are in Fatherly and filial relationship, in perfect "fellowship."¹

V

This momentous teaching affirms that the ministry of Christ is something more than a moral, or ethical, dispensation: "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached."² In the light of this significant teaching, moral perfection does not fulfill the whole destiny of man. For, as revealed in Christ, man, when made a "partaker of the divine nature," eventually is to come into the unveiled presence of God, spirit to Spirit; and when grown to the fullness of the stature of that spiritual manhood revealed in Christ³ man will then be "in the form of God,"⁴ "the very image of his substance:"⁵ for the human soul will then be filled and informed with "all the fulness of God."⁶

¹ 1 John i: 3.

² Luke xvi: 16.

³ Eph. iv: 13.

⁴ Phil. ii: 6.

⁵ Heb. i: 3; 2 Cor. iv: 4. (R. V.)

⁶ Eph. iii: 19.

VI

In his teaching on the mount Jesus began his earthly ministry by first spiritualizing the moral sense—pushing it deeper than conduct, making it apply ethically to the “thoughts of the heart.” He affirmed that the secret glance of carnal desire is the act of adultery “committed already;”¹ for in a spiritual realm it is the thought which determines the sin. Natural morality, or right conduct, is the righteousness of man,² and this is of the order of a natural world: but he who reveals the Spirit discloses a spiritual order of righteousness which transcends the righteousness of the moral law; for the scripture says, “The gospel of Christ . . . is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth . . . for therein is revealed a righteousness of God.”³

¹ Matt. v: 28.

² Rom. x: 3, 4.

³ Rom. i: 16, 17. (R. V.)

Jesus said to his disciples, "Verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them ; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."¹ For until revealed in Christ, and in his spiritual followers, the divine Spirit, as already stated, was not manifested as abiding *in* man.

To repeat, therefore : before the coming of Christ, God's word was ministered by angels² and prophets, as instrumentalities, and man was approached as a "servant," from without. But Jesus said to his disciples, "Henceforth I call you not servants, . . . but I have called you friends."³ For of that earlier dispensation the scripture says, "Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were afterward to be spoken ; but Christ as a son, over his

¹ Matt. xiii: 17.

² Heb. ii: 2.

³ John xv: 14, 15.

house" ¹—which is a realm of Spirit, "the kingdom of God."

VII

Moral truths, as of the order of Nature, may be apprehended clearly by the natural understanding, but spiritual things are "spiritually discerned;" ² and until this spiritual order of discernment is awakened in the mind "spiritual things" are deemed "mystical" — the apostle says they appear even "as foolishness." ³ But they are not wholly mystical to the spiritual consciousness, but normal or natural, as it were, and are clearly apprehended. For when a spiritual consciousness has once been awakened in man these higher truths are then discerned spirit to Spirit, for then like discerns like. ⁴ To the spiritual consciousness the moral law is then no longer the standard of righteousness, but God himself; even as Jesus said, "Be ye therefore

¹ Heb. iii: 5, 6. (R. V.)

² 1 Cor. ii: 14.

³ 1 Cor. ii: 14.

⁴ 1 Cor. ii: 10-13.

perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect ; ”¹ and when addressed as “Good Master,” Jesus replied, “ Why callest thou me good ? There is none good, but one ; that is, God.”²

Matt. v : 48.

² Matt. xix : 17.

THE SPIRIT IMPARTED TO MAN

I

THAT John discerned in Jesus a higher order of "life" than that which was fulfilled in himself is manifest from his words, "After me there cometh a man which is preferred before me; for he was before me.¹ . . . One mightier than I; whose shoelatchet I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.² . . . He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.³ . . . I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him."⁴

If this were a special or miraculous experience, wholly apart from what transpires subconsciously in the souls of all men when "born of the Spirit," then that special experience would have removed Jesus from off the plane of that humanity which is

¹ John i: 30.

² Mark i: 7.

³ Luke iii: 16.

⁴ John i: 32.

common to man, and consequently he could not have served as an example for man. But Jesus teaches otherwise, — “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also.”¹ This believing on him implies receiving his teaching and following his example in all things ; and as his anointing of the Spirit² was his source of power in “overcoming the world,” so will it be with his followers in like manner, even to that consummation of human destiny when they likewise shall be “filled with all the fulness of God ;”³ or when all things are “fulfilled”⁴ in “perfect man,” and God is “all in all.”⁵

II

It has been a subject of philosophical speculation, in the light of Science, as to whether there is discernible at any point in the order of Nature the evidence of a

¹ John xiv: 12.

² Acts x: 38.

³ Eph. iii: 19.

⁴ Matt. v: 18.

⁵ I Cor. xv: 28.

supernatural intervention marking, for instance, the divisions of the several kingdoms of Nature, or separating man from a lower order of creation. The tendency of modern scientific discovery is steadily toward establishing the uniformity of Nature through the unbroken continuity of natural law. But in the revelation of Jesus Christ his whole teaching is based upon a *supra*-natural intervention through this descent of the Spirit upon man.¹ The scripture says, "When the fulness of time was come" — that is, when the natural creation was eventually consummated in time — "God sent forth his Son . . . that we might receive the adoption of sons" and become "heirs of God through Christ."²

Jesus having received the Spirit, as symbolized at his baptism, imparts this same "gift of God" to his followers, for the scripture says, "He quickeneth whom he will."³ And that this "gift of the Spirit" is added, *ab extra*, to the natural constitu-

¹ John i: 32. ² Gal. iv: 4-7. ³ John v: 21.

tion of man is implied in the teaching concerning Jesus ; namely, that at his baptism “the heaven was opened unto him, and the Spirit descended upon him”¹ — symbolized by a dove : and thenceforth Jesus went forth “in the power of the Spirit.”²

No conceivable act is so wholly apart from the known order of Nature as this opening of the heaven and descending of the divine Spirit upon man. It reveals a “new life,” a new realm — the life of the Spirit, “the kingdom of God.” This experience of Jesus, as implied in the symbol given at his baptism, reveals a *supra*-natural imparting of the divine nature to man, disclosing his divine destiny. And this descent of the Spirit upon Jesus was the fulfilling of that ancient prophecy, “Behold my servant, whom I have chosen, . . . I will put my Spirit upon him.”³

In the light of this significant teaching there is imparted to man, through Christ,

¹ Luke iii : 21, 22.

² Luke iv : 14.

³ Isa. xlii : 1 ; Matt. xii : 18.

not merely a higher ethical principle of life, but a wholly new nature—of “the Spirit of God.”¹ This truth is insisted on with constant reiteration in the New Testament, and with every variety in the form of expression, because of its fundamental importance in connection with the fulfillment of human destiny; for a knowledge of the truth² is a means of hastening the consummation of that destiny.

¹ Rom. viii : 9, 14.

² John viii : 32.

ACTIVITIES OF NATURE AND SPIRIT

I

It has thus been shown from the testimony of scripture that the revelation of the Spirit is *supra*-natural¹—over and above Nature. The spiritual includes the natural, but the natural only includes the spiritual when man is “born of God.” The revelation of this truth is to the individual soul, through Jesus Christ, who said, “I am the way and the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.”²

With reference to this spiritual enlightenment of man by Revelation, the apostle Peter says, “We have a sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star

¹ Eph. i: 17.

² John xiv: 6.

arise in your hearts.”¹ For it is through this “sure word of prophecy” that man gains a knowledge of his true life and ultimate destiny, the revelation having culminated in a manifestation of the truth in all its fullness in Jesus Christ.

II

We may conclude, therefore, that Science and Revelation are of two orders of knowledge, derived respectively from Nature and Spirit; and these two orders of knowledge are coördinated in “perfect man.” One order of enlightenment relates to a realm of Nature, while the other relates to a realm of Spirit, or “kingdom of God;” one is concerned with the temporal life of man, while the other is concerned with “eternal life” and man’s ultimate destiny—for “This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”²

¹ 2 Peter i: 19.

² John xvii: 3.

III

The natural history of creation, in the light of Science, passes from the so-called inorganic to the organic, from lower to higher organisms, from unconscious to conscious life. Thence on, in man, physical instincts are gradually subordinated to intellectual and moral faculties until the body eventually becomes the servant of a righteous and informed mind. Parallel with this enlightenment of Science is the order of Revelation, which traces man's passage from a carnal to a moral state, as witnessed in the Old Testament ; and from a moral to a spiritual state, as witnessed in the New Testament. While, therefore, Science explains the ceaseless activities of Nature in the forming of man — as to his physical organism and natural attributes of mind — Revelation affirms the activity of the Spirit, as striving with man¹ through the ages, seeking to redeem the human soul from

¹ Gen. vi : 3.

“the beggarly elements”¹ of the world, that God may impart his own nature to man and thus consummate the divine purpose of his creation — in a “kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”² And if Science now sheds increasing light on the natural process of man’s creation, Revelation discloses with equal certainty, to say the least, the operation of the Spirit; first through “the Spirit of prophecy” and then through Jesus Christ, “redeeming” the human soul from the world and “saving” it to its divine destiny.

IV

That these two orders of truth, constituting Science and Revelation, derived respectively from Nature and Spirit, are destined to become coördinated in a larger and more comprehensive view of man’s nature and destiny than the human mind has hitherto conceived, is a conclusion now dawning in the human consciousness.

¹ Gal. iv: 9.

² Matt. xxv: 34.

Speculation or conjecture, whether in the guise of philosophy or of science, can never become a substitute for Revelation, for Nature affirms no truth concerning that which lies beyond the temporal life of man. The apostle Paul, alive to the tendency of the human mind to substitute "man's wisdom" for the revelation of the Spirit, gives this significant warning: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."¹

But while Science continues to open new vistas of truth through the discovery of natural law, and Revelation continues to disclose new heights to which the consciousness of man may attain through Christ, then must these instrumentalities ever continue to enlarge the horizon of the human mind and afford a clearer vision of the grandeur of human life and human destiny.

Man has already discerned that that is

¹ Col. ii : 8.

not life in which no new day of truth ever dawns. The infinite springs of the wisdom and mystery of Nature will never be exhausted by Science, nor will the infinite fullness of the Spirit ever be exhausted by Revelation, or the depths of Revelation ever be sounded by the plummet of human thought ; for Jesus said, “ I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth . . . and shew you things to come.”¹

¹ John xvi: 12, 13.

PART II

THE DESTINY OF MAN AS REVEALED
IN CHRIST

Jesus said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." — JOHN xviii : 37.

"I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly." — JOHN x : 10. (R. V.)

"I am the way and the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." — JOHN xiv : 6.

THE DESTINY OF MAN AS REVEALED IN CHRIST

“WHAT IS MAN?”

I

THE world of nature, including the universe and man, reveals God as the creator and sustainer of all things ; but as to his spiritual Fatherhood the scriptures affirm God is revealed through his Son Jesus Christ, who said, “No man knoweth the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.”¹

And in like manner, “man” may be known as to his temporal capacities in the earthly life ; but before human destiny was revealed in Christ the mind of this world was ignorant of what really constitutes man,

¹ Matt. xi : 27.

“perfect man ;”¹ for the highest earthly capacity of the human soul is as nothing compared with that celestial estate² to which man attains when his destiny is fulfilled ; for as revealed in Christ the horizon of that destiny widens immeasurably, and man is discerned to be, in the celestial state, in “fellowship”³ with God.

II

In the light of “the revelation of Jesus Christ,” therefore, it is evident that the height and breadth and depth of meaning that is hid in the generic term “man,” as this term is used in the symbol of Genesis, is not compassed by the nature of man on this earth, but may be discerned in that celestial Son of man who descended out of heaven ; for Jesus said, addressing the human consciousness of this world, “No man hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven ; even the Son of man which is in heaven.”⁴ Again, he said,

¹ Eph. iv: 13.

² Rom. viii: 18.

³ 1 John i: 3.

⁴ John iii: 13.

“What then if ye should behold the Son of man ascending where he was before ?”¹

As used by Christ the term “Son of man” is not simply a messianic title ; the expression signifies, primarily, the veritable existence of the Messiah as an individual human soul ; and when he said, “No man hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven,” Jesus affirms that the same *man* who eventually “ascended again,” had likewise “descended out of heaven ;” for he says that he is “the Son of man which is in heaven.” And this is likewise affirmed in the scripture: “He that descended first into the lower parts of the earth, is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things, and for the perfecting of the saints . . . till we all come into the unity of the faith, and to the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”²

¹ John vi : 62. (R. V.)

² Eph. iv : 4-9.

III

In the light of this significant revelation, whereby the pre-incarnate existence of the human soul of the Messiah is implied, as well as his post-incarnate glorified state as "perfect man," human destiny is found to embrace a transcendent heavenly or divine estate, which is only conceivable through its revelation and manifestation in Jesus Christ. When, therefore, it is affirmed in the scriptures that Christ was "born of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God, with power, according to the Spirit of holiness,"¹ it is not implied therein that the Messiah was first endowed with a human soul at the time of his incarnation; for of that incarnation it was prophesied, "A body didst thou prepare for me;"² and when born of Mary this was designated "that holy thing . . . which shall be called the 'Son of God.'"³

¹ Rom. i: 3, 4.

² Heb. x: 5. (R. V.)

³ Luke i: 35.

IN THE LIGHT OF REVELATION 95

For in the light of the New Testament, body, soul, and spirit¹ are all comprised in perfect man; and the apostle Paul affirms that "there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body,"² and "the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."³

¹ 1 Thess. v : 23. ² 1 Cor. xv : 44.

³ Rom. viii : 21.

“THE SON OF MAN”

I

The expression, “Son of man,” by which Jesus insistently designates himself, stands, therefore, for the individual human soul. The term is applicable to Jesus because he is indeed very man, even as that which “dwelleth”¹ in him with all the divine “fulness” is very God. “He knew what was in man,”² for human nature was fulfilled in him; he experienced this “at all points, being tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”³ “For,” the scripture affirms, “both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren.”⁴

In the light of this teaching, “the Son

¹ Col. ii: 9.

² John ii: 25.

³ Heb. iv: 15.

⁴ Heb. ii: 11, 12.

of man in heaven," as to his human soul, is of one nature with his "brethren" of this world; but in him is manifested human destiny fulfilled in "perfect man" as Son of God. For, as manifested in Christ, the divine sonship consists in man's birth of the Spirit;¹ and the "Son of God" is the Spirit of the Father, the one only Spirit, "begotten" in man, imparted to man—as revealed once for all at the baptism of Jesus.² Through the revelation in Christ it may be discerned, therefore, that there is no divine sonship unassociated with the human soul; for in the "Son of man" the divine Spirit is eternally individualized and made personal as "the Son of God," as affirmed by the scripture: "This man, because he continueth forever, hath an unchangeable priesthood."³

II

The words, "The Son of man descended out of heaven," and "This man . . . con-

¹ John iii: 5. ² Mark i: 10. ³ Heb. vii: 24.

tinueth forever," disclose to the mind of this world a heavenly estate of man, revealed in Jesus Christ. And by this same light it may be discerned that the humanity of the Messiah was not temporarily assumed through his incarnation, but was "made flesh "¹ by that means. This is an important distinction; for had the human soul of the Messiah originated as a special or miraculous creation, Jesus would then have stood among men as an unrelated being, incapable of revealing their destiny. Were not Jesus truly "man," and as he insistently affirms, the "Son of man," he could not have served as an example for man; for an example, to be effectual as such, must be wholly within the conditions wherein it is to serve as a pattern. But according to his own teaching the Messiah is affirmed to be "Son of man" before and after his incarnation; and the scripture says he is "perfect man"²—as such he is a revealer of human destiny.

¹ John i: 14.

² Eph. iv: 13.

III

To apprehend the fullness, or completeness, of the revelation of human destiny in Jesus Christ it is essential that the humanity of the Messiah be discerned in his pre-incarnate, his incarnate, and in his ascended or glorified states of being ; therefore with equal insistence the scriptures affirm that it was "the Son of man" who descended, was incarnated, and ascended again : for Jesus said, "The Son of man will come with power and great glory"¹— in his future heavenly manifestations.

The persistence of the human personality of Jesus in the heavenly; as in the earthly state of being, is further attested by the words, "This same Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven"²— as symbolized by his visible ascension. That is, the Messiah will reappear in his future heavenly manifestations

¹ Matt. xxiv : 30.

² Acts i : 11. (R. V.)

as a human soul in whom “dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead, bodily ;”¹ for the scripture distinctly affirms the persistence of that human personality — “this same Jesus.”

In the light of Revelation, therefore, it may be discerned that Jesus, as the Christ of God, is a human soul perfected — a celestial “man,” filled and informed with the Spirit of God and individualized as “Jesus;” of whom it is affirmed that “God hath made him both Lord and Christ.”²

¹ Col. ii : 9.

² Acts ii : 36.

“THE MESSIAH”

I

IN order that the Son of God, as “the Son of man in heaven,” might reveal in himself, or in his own personal experience, “the way and the truth and the life”¹ — as the means whereby this newly created family of man is to attain to the end or consummation of human destiny — it was necessary that he should descend, as the Messiah, into their conditions and stand beside his brethren of this world on their own plane of experience. And that he might so “descend” it was necessary that he should be deprived, for a season, of “that glory which he had with the Father”² in the heavenly, or celestial state of being. That “glory” was of the Father’s Spirit, which he relinquished in order that he might, as prophecy figuratively ex-

¹ John xiv: 6.

² John xvii: 5.

pressed it, "descend into the lower parts of the earth,"¹ or into the unquickened natural state of man; and that he might so descend, the apostle Paul affirms, "He emptied himself, taking the form of a servant."²

Spiritually there is no other way conceivable by which this "descent" of the Messiah into the earthly state of man could have been effected; for this descent was not through space, but by his being emptied, or made void, of that indwelling divine presence with which he was reendowed at his baptism, when "the Spirit descended upon him," figuratively, "like a dove."³

II

That the descent of the Messiah into the earthly life was gradual, culminating in his incarnation, is apparent when messianic prophecy is studied as a whole. And as implied in the expression, "he emptied him-

¹ Eph. iv:8-10.

² Phil. ii:7. (R. V.)

³ John i:32.

self,"¹ this descent was effected by a willing relinquishment of that divine endowment which the Son of man in heaven, as the Son of God, had from the Father, as implied in his prayer to God at the close of his ministry : "Glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."²

The divine Spirit having been withdrawn for a season from that celestial human soul, the Messiah came as a "servant ;" that is, in his own human *proprium* as "Son of man ;" and in this natural, moral state, Jesus remained until reendowed with the divine Spirit at the beginning of his ministry.

III

Apart from speculative conjecture, discerned in the light of messianic prophecy the descent of the Son of God as Son of man was by his passing from a divine to a human state of consciousness, from a spiritual to a natural state of being ; and the

¹ Phil. ii:7. (R. V.)

² John xvii:5.

figurative expression, "He emptied himself," signifies the means by which this descent from the heavenly to the earthly state was effected.

This withdrawal of the divine Spirit is likewise implied in the words, "In his humiliation his judgment was taken away;"¹ for, coming in his own human *proprium*, as "Son of man," the mind of the Messiah was the mind of "perfect man" temporarily made void of its heavenly endowment of the Father's indwelling Spirit; and he was so "emptied," or deprived of his divine inheritance, that he might stand beside his brethren of this world in their unquickened, natural state of being, to show them "the way" by which they might be "redeemed" from the conditions in which the earthly man is formed, and to provide a means whereby they might be "saved" to that divine inheritance for which they were destined; for Jesus said, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me."²

¹ Acts viii : 33.

² John xiv . 6.

This relinquishment of the Spirit is likewise implied in the words, "For your sake, he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich."¹ Thus, as figuratively foretold by prophecy, the Messiah descended "into the pit" and "miry clay,"² that he might approach this earthly family of man consciously, or normally, on the natural plane of life, face to face; that by his aid and example he might lift this newly created human family up to God, as affirmed in the words: "And I, if I be lifted up out of the earth, will draw all men unto me."³

IV

In the light of both Old and New Testament prophecy, therefore, it may be discerned that the descending of the Messiah as Son of man, and his "rising again"⁴ as Son of God, was solely with reference to his having relinquished for a season his

¹ 2 Cor. viii: 9. (R. V.)

² Psa. xl: 2.

³ John xii: 32. (R. V. marg.)

⁴ Rom. viii: 34.

divine inheritance of the Father's Spirit, and to his subsequent reëndowment with the same: upon this momentous truth is based, fundamentally, his revelation of human destiny.

For it is inconceivable that any being, God or man, could, so to speak, be "emptied" of his own nature, of his own *proprium*. But the Son of God, as "the Son of man in heaven" filled with the Spirit of the Father, could have that indwelling Spirit withdrawn¹ for a season and "descend out of heaven" in his own human personality as "Son of man," being incarnated "of the seed of David according to the flesh."² And Jesus distinctly affirms that it was the "Son of man" who so descended.³ Upon this fundamental truth of his gospel, or "good tidings," is based his revelation of man's ultimate destiny. For by his descending from heaven as Son of man, and by his ascending again as Son of

¹ "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me." — Psa. li:11.

² Rom. i:3.

³ John iii:13. (R. V.)

God, Jesus, as the Christ of God,¹ reveals to the mind of this world the whole nature and destiny of "perfect man," manifesting "the truth" in his own person and showing his brethren the way by which they likewise are to attain to the same inheritance, as expressed in his prayer to the Father, "That they may be one, even as we are."²

V

In that unquickened, natural state of man into which the Messiah had descended he remained for thirty years, known as "the carpenter,"³ known as "Jesus of Nazareth,"⁴ in no way differing in his human nature from his fellow men of this earth save as to his sinlessness,⁵ and in the fact that as his was the incarnation of a preexisting human soul he was born of a virgin. Emerging from that sinless, moral state, no record of which was deemed es-

¹ Rev. xi: 15; xii: 10 ² John xvii: 11. (R. V.)

³ Mark vi: 3; Acts ii: 22; x: 38.

⁴ John i: 45; Acts x: 38. ⁵ Heb. iv: 15.

sential to his message of "good tidings," the Messiah was reëndowed with the Father's Spirit at the beginning of his ministry, when "the Spirit descended upon him . . . and abode on him ; and there came a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" ¹ — a fulfillment of the prophecy, "This day have I begotten thee." ²

The sign of this imparting of the divine Spirit, as given at the baptism of Jesus, was a symbol of that regeneration which is gradually perfected in the human soul ; for at a later day Jesus said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." ³ For it was not until Jesus drew nigh to the end of his sojourn on earth that he said, "The prince of this world cometh and hath [or "findeth," R. V.] nothing in me ;" ⁴ for there remained in him then nothing that was

¹ Matt. iii : 17.

² Psa. ii : 7 ; Acts xiii : 33 ; Heb. i : 5.

³ Luke xii : 50.

⁴ John xiv : 30.

open to further temptation ; and then it was that he prayed the Father to restore to him, in all its fullness, the divine Spirit : "Glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." ¹

VI

What transpired, therefore, at his baptism by John was but the symbol of that spiritual baptism that was only fully consummated at a later day when he had been "made perfect through sufferings" ² and had "overcome the world" ³ that is set in the human heart ⁴ in the forming of man. Then it was that Jesus said, "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified;" ⁵ that is, reendowed with the Father's indwelling presence with all the divine "fulness."

Signs are a teaching instrumentality, and this descending of the Spirit upon Jesus in

¹ John xvii: 5. ² Heb. ii: 10. ³ John xvi: 33.

⁴ Eccl. iii : 11. ⁵ John xii : 23.

the form of a dove was indicative of the imparting of that to him which was not himself, but the Spirit of the Father, in fulfillment of the prophecy, "Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall bring forth judgment unto truth."¹

In the spiritual, as in the natural world, growth is gradual; and even as it was said of Jesus in his earlier years, that he "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man,"² so likewise from that initial spiritual experience at his baptism by John, when "the heaven was opened unto him,"³ Jesus eventually attained to the fullness or perfection of that spiritual manhood⁴ of which his followers, through his aid and power, are made partakers when they likewise are "become the sons of God"⁵ through this same imparting of the Spirit to them that are willing to receive the divine gift.

¹ Isa. xliii : 10; Matt. xii : 18.

² Luke ii : 52. ³ Matt. iii : 16, 17.

⁴ 1 Cor. xv : 45, 49. ⁵ John i : 12.

VII

That unquickened, natural state of man into which the Messiah had descended — apart from all considerations of willful sin — is designated a state of spiritual “death :” “For to this end Christ both died and rose and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and the living ;”¹ that is, Lord of both his “natural-minded” and “spiritual-minded” followers. For the apostle Paul, in marking this distinction, says, “First the natural ; afterward, then that which is spiritual ; the first man is of the earth, earthy ; the second man is of heaven ; . . . as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”²

That the “death” and “rising again” of the Messiah is commonly interpreted as referring exclusively to the bodily experience of Jesus — to his physical death and bodily resurrection — is according to a nat-

¹ Rom. xiv : 9.

² 1 Cor. xv : 45-49. (R. V.)

ural understanding, to the exclusion of its spiritual significance. But the terms "life" and "death" are used in the scriptures in both senses ; and as herein employed the terms "living" and "dead" signify the quickened or unquickened state of man with reference to the presence or absence of the divine Spirit, as when Jesus said : "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God ; and they that hear shall live."¹

VIII

The "death" experienced by that heavenly Son of man, who was the Son of God, was, therefore, not alone with reference to the termination of his physical life at his crucifixion ; primarily it was with reference to his having descended from the heavenly or spiritual, to the earthly or natural state of man. For the Messiah could not have revealed himself, or his divine message, to

¹ John v : 25 ; xi : 25, 26.

his "brethren" of this world, except he stood beside them on their own plane of life, in their earthly conditions, being subject to like temptations with them, though sinless. This, then, was his "sacrifice;" namely, that for their sake¹ the Son of God laid aside "that glory which he had with the Father" — that divine endowment of the Spirit which was his "joy" and "glory" in the heavenly state — that he might descend into their earthly and unquickened state to "redeem" and "save" them. In all its height and breadth and depth of meaning this was that spiritual "death and sacrifice" which the Messiah experienced in the fulfillment of his mission. He who is "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity"² descended, according to the words of prophecy, into "an horrible pit" and "miry clay;"³ he who was in fellowship with God in that glory which he had with the Father "emptied himself" of his divine inheritance, impover-

¹ 2 Cor. viii:9. ² Hab. i:13. ³ Psa. xl:2.

ished himself, "that ye through his poverty might become rich" ¹— that he might reveal in himself the way and the truth and the life, and, when reëndowed with the Spirit of the Most High, that he might impart the "gift of God" ² to his brethren of this world, that they likewise may be made "partakers of the divine nature" ³ and "become the sons of God." ⁴

¹ 2 Cor. viii: 9. (R. V.) ² John iv: 10.

³ 2 Peter i: 4. ⁴ John i: 12.

“PERFECT MAN”

I

STARTING, therefore, as “the captain of their salvation,”¹ from that unquickened natural state of man into which the Messiah had descended, Jesus received the initial sign of his reëndowment with the Spirit at his baptism, when “the heaven was opened”² unto him. Thence on he “rose again,” spiritually, for there is a progress observable in the character of his teaching, a gradual transfiguration of his mind, until, toward the end of his ministry, he announces that “the hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified.”³

In manifesting “the way,” Jesus himself passed through the experience that all souls must pass through, for he reveals the nature and destiny of “perfect man” in all states of being, as well as the spiritual Father-

¹ Heb. ii: 10. ² Luke iii: 21. ³ John xii: 23.

hood of God. His destiny is man's destiny, for the scripture says, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."¹ But the destiny which he reveals is so overwhelming to the mind, so holy, so divine — ending in man's inheritance of "all the fulness of God"² — that to the natural understanding it seems blasphemous even to name it. When Jesus declared the truth, as manifested in himself, "Then took they up stones to cast at him," deeming him a blasphemer of God; "that he, being a man, should make himself God." But Jesus answered, "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came (and the scripture cannot be broken), say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?"³ The claim of Jesus was even less in its seeming than that warranted by the

¹ 1 John i: 2, 3.

² Eph. iii: 19.

³ John x: 31-36; Psa. lxxxii: 6; Isa. xli: 23.

scripture he quotes, or that elsewhere is prophesied of man ; namely, that when made a partaker of the divine nature — eventually, when fully perfected — man is “in the image and likeness of God.”

II

This godlike nature of perfect man is affirmed of those “unto whom the word of God came,” who are thus made “partakers of the divine nature.”¹ For this godlike nature and divine likeness are spiritual ; and the revelation of this truth concerning man may only be discerned in the life and character of Jesus Christ, who is affirmed to be “in the form of God,”² the “very image of his substance.”³

As taught by Christ concerning the necessity that “man must be born again,” or “born of the Spirit,” the distinction between sons of man and sons of God is a generic distinction ; the natural mind does

¹ 2 Peter i : 4.

² Phil. ii : 6.

³ Heb. i : 3 (R. V.).

not become spiritual through any refining process in the order of nature or of mental culture. The natural mind is capable of infinite refinements without becoming in the least degree spiritual. Even as to the perfect moral sense, Jesus said of John the Baptist that he was less than the least of those who are of the kingdom of heaven.¹

Christ manifested in himself these two natures, the spiritual and the natural, the divine and the human, as "reconciled in one body,"² as brought into perfect agreement of will and life; and this supreme manifestation in him was the revelation of a universal truth: all men, when "born of the Spirit," are sons of God, from the least unto the greatest; for in Christ it may be discerned that there is no divine sonship unassociated with the human soul.

III

When Jesus stood upon this earth as the sole exponent of that divine sonship which

¹ Matt. xi: 11.

² Eph. ii: 14-16.

is "born of the Spirit,"¹ he was designated "the only-begotten;"² but when his followers likewise, through his aid and power, were made partakers of the same Spirit, Jesus was then discerned as the "first-begotten:"³ "Whom he did foreknow [that is, the spiritual being which man is destined to become], he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren."⁴ And Jesus tells his followers, who are also made "partakers of the divine nature"⁵ through this gift of the Spirit, that they likewise shall speak the words of God; for on sending them forth to proclaim the glad tidings of man's divine destiny, he said, "Be not anxious how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you."⁶

¹ John iii: 5.

² John i: 14.

³ Heb. i: 6.

⁴ Rom. viii: 29.

⁵ 2 Peter i: 4.

⁶ Matt. x: 19, 20. (R. V.)

IV

Thus Christ manifests in himself the ultimate destiny of man ; for the scripture says, “ Ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ, did put on Christ. . . . For ye are all one man in Christ Jesus.”¹

Jesus claims nothing for himself that he does not affirm to be equally the heritage of his followers when they stand where he stands : “ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also.”² He does not claim for himself the generic title “ man ; ” he affirms that he is the “ Son of man ” — an individual human soul. Nor does he claim for himself the generic title “ God ; ” he affirms that he is the “ Son of God.” But while his followers in the earthly life are but as “ spiritual babes,” he is grown to the full stature of a spiritual manhood — he is

¹ Gal. iii : 26-28. (R. V.)

² John xiv : 12.

“perfect man,”¹ he is “in the form of God,”² “the very image of his substance :”³ that is, the perfect expression of the Spirit. In him, therefore, is revealed “all the fulness” of the divine and human natures in perfect “fellowship,” in Fatherly and Filial relationship through oneness of Spirit and will and life ; he is, therefore, a revealer both of God and perfect man, manifesting in himself the ultimate destiny of the individual human soul when made perfect even as he is perfect.

V

That the Messiah is truly man, “raised up unto you of your brethren,”⁴ and that his relationship to God is the same relationship, and not another, as that which his followers shall eventually bear to the Father as “the sons of God,” is attested by these words of Christ after he had risen from the grave :⁵ “Go to my brethren, and say unto

¹ Eph. iv: 13.

² Phil. ii: 6.

³ Heb. i: 3. (R. V.)

⁴ Acts iii: 22.

them: I ascend to my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God."¹ Though risen from the grave, the Son of God is still Son of man; though passed beyond the earthly life, he is still of "the brethren"—he is still human; his Father is their Father; his God their God. Death has wrought no change in his relationships to God and man; physical dissolution has not in the least affected the human soul of Jesus. And he is eager to assure his brethren that, though risen and glorified, he is not parted from them. In point of fact, this is for them the supreme joy of his "glad tidings," the very heart and crown of his revelation of human destiny. For his tidings are of that heavenly estate of perfect man wherein God is "all in all";² and that ultimate destiny of man he is actually manifesting in himself, in his own person, for he is "the Son of man in heaven." Recognizing this, the apostle Paul says, "If Christ be not risen, then

¹ John xx: 17.

² 1 Cor. xv: 28.

is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.”¹ For through the manifestations of the risen Jesus the revelation of human destiny is projected into the heavens to the very end and consummation of that destiny, as manifested in the ascended and glorified Christ.

VI

That the “Son of God” is the Father’s Spirit imparted to the human soul, individualized and made personal in man, is once for all revealed in Jesus Christ; for he is the type and example of that celestial brotherhood of perfect man in whom God is “all in all” and “they are without fault before his throne;”² that is, they are perfect even in the light of God’s presence. The God and Father of that celestial race of man is likewise “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,”³ who so perfectly images in character and voices in spirit that divine indwelling presence that Jesus said,

¹ 1 Cor. xv: 14.

² Rev. xiv: 5.

³ 2 Cor. i: 3; xi: 31; Eph. i: 3; 1 Peter i: 3.

“He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.”¹

VII

The expression “our Lord, and his Christ”² marks a distinction between that one only divine Spirit, which is God — for Jesus affirms that “God is Spirit”³ — and the manifestation of that Spirit as abiding in all its fullness in the soul of perfect man. That this distinction was in the mind of Paul is implied in his words, “There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”⁴ Through him “all things” with respect to the natures both of God and perfect man are “brought to light,” or made conscious in man. And the Revelation in him is complete and final, as implied in his words, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life;”⁵ for in him the divine will and wisdom and love are perfectly manifested forth to the

¹ John xiv:9.

² Rev. xi: 15.

³ John iv:24. (R. V. marg.)

⁴ 1 Tim. ii:5.

⁵ John xiv:6.

world. For he is the "form" and "brightness" ¹ of that indwelling divinity "which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." ²

¹ Heb. i : 3.

² Eph. iii : 5.

“THE SON OF MAN IN HEAVEN”

I

THE human mind of this world could have formed no conception of that ultimate heavenly state of being which is realized in perfect man as the culmination of human destiny, except it were enlightened through some other means than that by which man commonly acquires knowledge. For that ultimate destiny of the human soul lies hid in a transcendent future which only a revelation could anticipate. And the scripture affirms that the revelation was given “To make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.”¹

That he through whom this special family of man is formed, might redeem it from the

¹ Eph. iii:9.

earthly state and save it to its divine inheritance, he entered their conditions and shared their lot, undergoing the experience that is common to man. For he "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin,"¹ "Who in the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of salvation unto all them that obey him."²

II

The Messiah brought to this earthly family of man, as manifested in himself, "tidings" of that heavenly family of perfect man which is in the "image and likeness of God" and "in fellowship with the Father;" of whom it had been prophesied, "I said, ye are gods." Of that celestial

¹ Heb. iv:15.

² Heb. v:7-9.

people he is the “chosen one”¹ through whom “God created the worlds” and this special family of man, which eventually he redeems and saves. Thus Jesus reveals and manifests in himself the ultimate destiny of the race and of the individual human soul. He is for this world the sole “mediator between God and men, himself man;”² and as God’s celestial vicegerent³ he is “in the form of God,” even as it was expressed of old through prophecy. “Before me there was no God formed; neither shall there be after me.”⁴ For when the Father is revealed, “whom no man hath seen, nor can see,”⁵ God is then discerned as purely spiritual Being⁶—“the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”⁷

It was by means of that anthropomorphic conception of “God formed” in the Son of man in heaven, who is indeed “the very

¹ Psa. lxxxix : 19.

² 1 Tim. ii : 5. (R. V.)

³ Acts iii : 20, 21.

⁴ Isa. xliii : 10.

⁵ 1 Tim. vi : 16.

⁶ John iv : 24.

⁷ 2 Cor. xi : 31; Eph. i : 3; 1 Peter i : 3.

image" of the divine substance, that the Deity, in the order of Revelation, was made apprehensible to the mind of the Israelites while as yet the Spirit of the Father was unrevealed. For a purely spiritual revelation of the Deity would have been incomprehensible to the human mind just emerging from its carnal state.

III

The "Spirit of prophecy" — which is affirmed to be "the testimony of Jesus"¹ — voiced by anticipation from a realm that is above time what was to befall the Messiah in the fulfillment of his mission; not only as to outward events, but as to his inward experience as well, as expressed through the prophets and in the psalms: "Thou hast brought me into the dust of death"² — through his incarnation: but "Thou shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth"³. . . and I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with

¹ Rev. xix:10. ² Psa. xxii:15. ³ Psa. lxxi:20.

thy likeness. . . . I will declare thy name unto my brethren.¹ . . . I will declare the decree, The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son ; this day have I begotten thee"² — the fulfillment of which was when the Spirit descended upon Jesus and "abode on him."³ These and other like utterances of prophecy are actually the words of the Son of man in heaven foretelling his future earthly experience, speaking above time and in the first person, "by the mouth of his prophets."⁴

IV

Studying that earlier revelation, expressed in Old Testament prophecy, the disciples of Jesus perceived that it was the Christ who was with the Israelites,⁵ speaking by "the angel of his presence," even as was taught by the Messiah after he had risen from the grave: "These are the words

¹ Psa. xvii: 15; xxii: 22.

² Psa. ii: 7; Acts xiii: 33; Heb. i: 5; v: 5.

³ John i: 32. ⁴ Luke i: 70. ⁵ 1 Cor. x: 4.

which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, how that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their mind, that they might understand the scriptures" ¹ — spiritually.

It was necessary that man, in the order of his forming, should first be approached on a natural plane, in his natural state of being, before God could reveal himself spiritually, "face to face," as he is revealed in Jesus Christ "by the Spirit;" who said, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father;" "The Father is in me, and I in him." ² But Jesus implies that this discernment is spiritual, when he says, "not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God." ³

In the order of God's creation of the human soul it was necessary that the natural state should first be fulfilled by implant-

¹ Luke xxiv: 44-46. (R. V.)

² John x: 38; xiv: 9. ³ John vi: 46.

ing in the mind and heart a moral sense, through the Old Testament dispensation, before man could be quickened by the Spirit imparted from the Father. For the "carnal mind" is impervious to spiritual influences, and until a moral sense is awakened in man there is no ground of preparation for receiving the "gift of God."¹

¹ John iv: 10.

“THE MAN, CHRIST JESUS”

I

THE life of Christ, therefore, is the revelation, for he personifies the truth concerning human destiny, being “himself man.” — “Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by many mighty works.”¹ “This Jesus did God raise up. . . . Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this” . . . and God “hath made him both Lord and Christ.”² Again, it is written: God “hath glorified his Servant Jesus;”³ “Repent ye therefore . . . that he may send the Christ whom he hath appointed for you, even Jesus: whom the heaven must receive until the times of res-

¹ Acts ii:22. ² Acts ii:32-36. (R. V.)

³ Acts iii:13. (R. V.)

titution of all things. . . . For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me.”¹ And again, “God having raised up his Servant, sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.”² The Messiah is elsewhere designated “thy holy Servant Jesus, whom thou didst anoint.”³ “Him did God exalt with his right hand to be [or to become] a Prince and a Saviour.”⁴ “Be it known unto you . . . that through this man is proclaimed unto you remission of sins.”⁵ And finally it is affirmed that God “will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained.”⁶

Next to the joy of his conscious presence, the joy of this revelation of human destiny in Jesus Christ is most capable of inspiring and uplifting the minds of his followers through all time as a message of “good

¹ Acts iii: 19-22.

² Acts iii: 26. (R. V.)

³ Acts iv: 27 (R. V.); x: 34.

⁴ Acts v: 31.

⁵ Acts xiii: 38.

⁶ Acts xvii: 31.

tidings of great joy which shall be to all people.”¹

II

This then was the understanding that was lodged in the minds of the immediate followers of Christ; namely, that the Christ of God² is truly man; a Son of man “anointed” with the Spirit of the Most High;³ a “servant” who recovered his divine sonship through the “gift of the Spirit,” as symbolized at his baptism. For the ministry of Christ was delayed until Jesus was reendowed with the Spirit, and thence on, it is said, he went forth “in the power of the Spirit”⁴ — the initial sign given at his baptism being confirmed in the Mount, as affirmed by the words, “He received from God, the Father, honour and glory when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”⁵

¹ Luke ii : 10.

² Rev. xi : 15; xii : 10.

³ Rom. viii : 11.

⁴ Luke iv : 14.

⁵ 2 Peter i : 17.

It is this indwelling of the divine presence in a human soul which distinguishes the mission and ministry of Christ from that moral dispensation of "Moses and the prophets," which Jesus said culminated in the order of Revelation with John.¹ For it is this indwelling of the divine presence in a human soul which distinguishes a "son" from a "servant" of God;² and this fundamental truth of Christ's message cannot be reiterated too often, since it has been obscured through metaphysical definitions. Christ's life is the life of perfect man in all states of being; and in order to a discernment of the fullness of his revelation of human destiny his humanity must be discerned in his pre-incarnate, his incarnate, and in his glorified states, as "the Son of man in heaven."

III

The distinction between a moral and a spiritual dispensation is implied in these

¹ Luke xvi: 16.

² Heb. iii: 5, 6.

words of Christ: "The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached;"¹ and it is said of Jesus that "he spake to them of the kingdom of heaven"—of that perfect state wherein human destiny is fulfilled; and in order to a right discernment of the distinction between the old and the new dispensations, it is necessary to distinguish between a "servant" and a "son"² in the order of God's instruments of Revelation. For it was through the revelation in Jesus Christ that a glorified human nature was first made manifest to the world; he first revealed that celestial state of man which is the fulfillment of human destiny. His was a revelation of that reward of the faithful long ago promised to Abraham: "Fear not; I am thy shield; and thy exceeding great reward;"³ for his was a revelation of that divine consummation when God is "all in all"⁴—a revelation, by manifestation, of

¹ Luke xvi: 16. ² Heb. iii: 5, 6. ³ Gen. xv: 1.

⁴ 1 Cor. xv: 28; 2 Peter i: 4.

the way of "salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit."¹ Had the revelation ended with the termination of the earthly life of Jesus, human destiny would have remained unrevealed ; but it is Christ speaking from heaven,² in his glorified personality as "the Holy Ghost," which carries the revelation forward according to the promise, " He will show you things to come."³

¹ 2 Thess. ii : 13. ² Heb. xii : 25. ³ John xvi : 13.

“THE WORLD TO COME”

I

THAT celestial state wherein the human soul is “glorified” by the indwelling presence of divinity is affirmed to be a state of being more exalted than the angelic, for it is designated “the holiest of all.”¹ It is a state so transcendently exalted, as manifested in Christ, that for the mind of this world it is indistinguishable from divinity itself. It is a state of human destiny, nevertheless, when discerned by the light of Christ’s mind ; for he who said, “My Father is greater than I”² affirmed thereby his own subordination to the Highest ; as when he said, “Why callest thou me good ; there is none good, but God ;”³ while his command to his followers was, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father, which is

¹ Heb. ix : 8. ² John xiv : 28. ³ Matt. xix : 17.

in heaven, is perfect.”¹ Nevertheless, of the Son it is said: “Having become so much better than the angels, as he hath inherited a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son. And when he bringeth in the first-born into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. . . . Of the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; and the sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”²

II

Nevertheless Christ speaking from heaven, in the Apocalypse, says of him that overcometh, he shall “sit with me in my throne; even as I also overcame and am

¹ Matt. v: 48.

² Heb. i: 4-10. (R. V.)

set down with the Father in his throne”¹ — which is a symbol of perfect “fellowship” on terms of equality, as implied in the words, “Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ;”² and this is also affirmed by the words of the apostle Paul, “We shall also reign with him.”³ But this fellowship on terms of equality, as manifested in Christ, is not an equality of the human with the divine, but is wholly by virtue of that indwelling Spirit of the Father abiding in the Son; which is “equal with God,”⁴ and indeed is very God from very God. That “fellowship,” therefore, between the human and the divine is wholly of the Spirit. Apart from that indwelling divine presence the human soul of Jesus partook of the weakness that belongs to human nature: “The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works;”⁵ “The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father’s who sent me;”⁶

¹ Rev. iii: 21. ² 1 John i: 3. ³ 2 Tim. ii: 12.

⁴ Phil. ii: 6. ⁵ John xiv: 10.

⁶ John xiv: 24. (R. V.)

“The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.”¹ “The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father doing; for what things soever he doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner.”² “I can of mine own self do nothing.”³

III

The metaphysical speculation that in the Messiah the divine Spirit was a substitute for the human soul (not superadded to it, as shown by the descent of the Spirit upon Jesus at his baptism) would utterly destroy or make void the reality of his human nature; for he then would have been human merely as to his bodily organism — a materialistic conception. But through the pre-incarnate existence of “the Son of man in heaven,” which Jesus affirms, and by the “lifting up” of the human soul of the Messiah into a heavenly realm in the person of Jesus — as witnessed at his ascension —

¹ John vi: 63. ² John v: 19-20. (R. V.)

³ John v: 30.

the Son of God may be discerned as truly man in that celestial state of being, and as such he is a revealer of human destiny.

IV

A revelation of the truth by actual manifestation differs from philosophical conjecture inasmuch as it conveyed this knowledge to the plain-minded followers of Christ by showing them the truth as it is actually realized in the person of Jesus, who said, “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.”¹ For a knowledge of the truth fills an important part in the redemption and salvation of man; and Jesus said, “This is life eternal; that they might know thee, the only true God; and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”²

For to know God as the creator of all things is a natural form of knowledge; but to know God as he is known to Christ is a spiritual form of knowledge; and to

¹ John xviii : 37.

² John xvii : 3.

know God spiritually is to know him as in himself he really is, to see him face to face: for Jesus said, "God is Spirit: and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in truth;"¹ while St. Paul says, "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."²

V

As discerned by Stephen in the moment of his martyrdom, who said, "I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God;"³ and as disclosed in the several manifestations attested by the apostle Paul after the ascension of Jesus;⁴ and to John at Patmos;⁵ the immediate followers of Christ discerned even in the glorified state of the Son of man a distinction between God "and his Christ."⁶ This knowledge was for them not an intellectual acquisition but a revela-

¹ John iv: 24. ² 2 Thess. ii: 13. ³ Acts vii: 56.

⁴ Acts ix: 3-6; xxii: 17-22; xxiii: 11; xxvii: 23, 24.

⁵ Rev. i: 1.

⁶ Rev. xi: 15; xii: 10.

tion of truth by its actual manifestation in Jesus, who makes no reference to the divine sonship apart from its fulfillment in his human soul : "Now is the Son of man glorified ; and God is glorified in him."¹ And when he referred to the celestial state of that sonship, in the future as well as in the past, he said, the Son of man "shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's"²—which implies that in him is revealed all the fullness of both the human and the divine natures as manifested in the person of the Son of man, even as was prophesied of men : "Ye are the temple of the living God ; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them ; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God."³ For the unity of all human souls in one human nature—including "Jesus, the Christ"—forms a universal brotherhood of man in all states of being, as revealed in the Son of man in heaven. This unity of all souls in one human nature, throughout all worlds, offsets

¹ John xiii : 31.

² Luke ix : 26.

³ 2 Cor. vi : 16.

that unity of Spirit¹ which centres all in God ; for the scripture affirms, "ye are all one man in Christ Jesus,"² and "he that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit."³

VI

For the revelation of man's ultimate destiny it was essential that the pre-incarnate existence of the Son of man should be made known through "the Spirit of prophecy,"⁴ and his glorified ascended state through "the manifestations of the Holy Ghost," if the whole nature and destiny of perfect man was to be disclosed to the mind of this world. For the earthly state, even as manifested in the life of Christ, is incapable of revealing all the glory of the divine destiny of perfect man — the earthly conditions are inadequate. Therefore the scripture says, "The Holy Ghost, this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest while as the first tabernacle was

¹ Eph. ii : 18.

² Gal. iii : 28. (R. V.)

³ 1 Cor. vi : 17.

⁴ Rev. xix : 10.

yet standing ; which is a figure for the time now present "¹— that is, after Christ's ascension into heaven.

In its outward sense this "first tabernacle" is sometimes construed as referring to a temple made with hands ; but in its spiritual sense it refers to the incarnated Christ — to that "natural body" which is temporal, as contrasted with that "spiritual body" which is eternal ; and it was not until Jesus had "risen again" and had "passed into the heavens"² that he revealed "the way into the holiest of all" through his ministrations as "the Comforter: even the Spirit of truth," who will "guide into all truth"³ — of whom it is said, "the Lord is that Spirit."⁴

¹ Heb. ix : 8, 9.

² Heb. iv : 14.

³ John xv : 26; xvi : 13.

⁴ 2 Cor. iii : 17.

“THE SPIRIT OF JESUS”

I

As the time drew near when Jesus was to be outwardly parted from his disciples through physical dissolution, he said, “The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified . . . and I, if I be lifted up from [R. V. marg. “out of”] the earth, will draw all men unto me.”¹ Viewed in the light of nature these words may signify “by what death he should die;”² but spiritually discerned in connection with the related teachings of Christ and his final “ascension,” they also refer to that lifting up of the Messiah to a heavenly realm, symbolized when “a cloud received him out of their sight.”³

To the natural understanding the crucifixion and bodily resurrection of Jesus mark

¹ John xii: 32. ² John xii: 33. ³ Acts i: 9.

the termination of his revelation ; but his spiritual-minded followers are further enlightened when "made partakers of the Holy Ghost,"¹ by the ministrations and manifestations of that heavenly "Comforter," who continues the revelation according to the promise, "He will abide with you forever . . . and guide you into all truth . . . and shew you things to come."²

II

While, therefore, the historic Christ is a Comforter for the natural mind, Jesus promised his spiritual followers "another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever"³ — which is none other than Christ "speaking from heaven"⁴ as the Holy Ghost, as implied in the following : "Having been forbidden of the Holy Ghost to speak the word in Asia, when they were come over against Mysia they assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus suffered them

¹ Heb. vi : 4.

² John xiv : 16, 17; xvi : 13.

³ John xiv : 16.

⁴ Heb. xii : 25.

not.”¹ And in his teaching concerning that heavenly ministry of the Spirit which was to follow his earthly ministry, Jesus said, “It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you;”² while it is elsewhere written, “This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”³

III

Thus the giving of the Holy Ghost was dependent upon the glorifying of the Son of man with the Father’s Spirit—“with that glory which he had with the Father before the world was;”⁴ which divine Spirit he imparts to his followers, as affirmed in these words: “Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; tarry ye in Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from

¹ Acts xvi: 6, 7. (R. V.)

² John xvi: 7.

³ John vii: 39.

⁴ John xvii: 5.

on high.”¹ “Wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water unto repentance; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence. . . . Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you.”²

IV

It is by means of the glorified Christ, the “Holy Ghost,”³ that the spirit of the Father is communicated to man in the earthly life; for Jesus said, “No man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”⁴ “I in them, and Thou in me,”⁵ is indicative of the means by which the “gift of God”⁶ is

¹ Luke xxiv: 49.

² Acts i: 4-9.

³ The “Holy Ghost” is the glorified Christ—the spirit or angel of Jesus filled with the Father’s indwelling Presence. The terms “Holy Ghost” and “Holy Spirit” are therefore interchangeable, according as the emphasis, or idea, is associated with personality, or the indwelling Spirit.

⁴ John xiv: 6.

⁵ John xvii: 23.

⁶ John iv: 10; Rom. vi: 23.

imparted to the followers of Christ, or of bringing to the consciousness of this earthly family of man the Father's Spirit. And when they were come together after his resurrection, "He breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Spirit."¹

However exalted the revelation, it is nevertheless the Son of man in heaven, "one chosen out of the people"² of a celestial realm, who serves as the channel for this divine communion; and it is still human destiny in its highest form that Christ is manifesting in himself; for the scripture says, "We all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory,"³ even as from the Lord the Spirit.

V

That the heavenly ministry of the Messiah as the Paraclete is a continuation of

¹ John xx : 22.

² Psa. lxxxix : 19.

³ 2 Cor. iii : 18. (R. V.)

his earthly ministry as the Son of man, is implied in these words of scripture: "We have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God . . . Not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."¹ While of his earthly ministry it is said, "Which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord,"² but is continued on "forever" by the glorified Christ, as "the spirit of truth, who will guide into all truth."³

VI

That the fullness or completeness of the revelation of human destiny may be discerned in Christ, it is important to recognize this identification of the Paraclete with "the Spirit of Jesus," who from a heavenly realm opens the way into "the holiest of all."⁴ Christ's revelation of divinity in all

¹ Heb. iv: 14, 15.

² Heb. ii: 3.

³ John xvi: 13.

⁴ Heb. ix: 8.

stages of existence is inseparable from his revelation of human destiny ; for throughout all worlds the revelation of God is through the soul of man : "He wills to dwell in you, that he may be made manifest to the world, and that his invisible glory may be revealed." And God's fullness and infinity is the measure of his revelation of himself in and through that celestial family of perfect man, of whom Jesus Christ is a representative — "one chosen out of the people."¹ For the revelation of the divine in the human is infinite in measure and duration : apart from this special creation the revelation is without beginning and without ending ; for the scripture says, "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed ; and hid, that shall not be known,"² and the infinity of God is manifested in an infinity of creations which reveal the eternal activity of his infinite and omnipotent Spirit.

¹ Isa. xliii : 10 ; Psa. lxxxix : 19.

² Matt. x : 26.

“THEN COMETH THE END”

I

THAT Christ's manifestation of divinity is representative “until the times of restitution of all things,”¹ and that in him is revealed the consummation of human destiny, is affirmed in the following transcendent revelation : “Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father ; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death. For, He put all things in subjection under his feet. But when he saith, All things are put in subjection, it is evident that he is excepted who did subject all things unto him. And

¹ Acts iii : 21.

when all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all.”¹

II

This is a revelation of ultimate truths transcending the powers of the human mind to have discerned by the light of nature; for it is a revelation of the consummation of the divine purpose in creating man — a revelation of that final state of man when human destiny is fulfilled. It is likewise a revelation of the truth that Christ’s is a representative manifestation of divinity until “all things shall be subdued unto him,” when he shall deliver up his workmanship to God, who will then be “all in all.” Therein may be discerned the full significance of that ancient prophecy, “before me there was no God formed; neither shall there be after me.”² For in “the kingdom

¹ 1 Cor. xv: 24-28. (R. V.)

² Isa. xliii: 10, 11.

of the Father,"¹ when Christ has delivered up his charge to God, St. John says, "we shall be like him."² And God will then be known as he is known to Christ; not only as "formed" in perfect man, but spiritually "face to face,"³ "eye to eye,"⁴ Spirit to spirit; for divinity will abide in every human soul in that celestial or perfect state, as in his Son Jesus Christ.

III

And in that same collective sense in which prophecy refers to a whole people as "my servant Israel,"⁵ so may it eventually be discerned, when God is "all in all," that his celestial family of "perfect man" is personified in the expression "my beloved Son," when the "first-begotten" of the Father is eventually discerned as the "chosen" representative of that divine Sonship which includes a celestial "people of God;" for

¹ Matt. xiii: 43.

² 1 John iii: 2.

³ 1 Cor. xiii: 12.

⁴ Isa. lii: 8; Rev. i: 7.

⁵ Isa. xli: 8, 9.

the scripture says of them who have become his followers, "Ye are all one man in Christ Jesus."¹

IV

In the light of prophecy "the revelation of Jesus Christ" may be discerned as whole and entire; for in him "all things" relating to the nature of God and the destiny of man are brought to light. For to know Christ is to know God and man as they are related in perfect fellowship in "the kingdom of the Father."

That fellowship of the divine and the human, as manifested in Jesus, is one of constant activity, implied in the words: "My Father worketh hitherto; and I work;"² "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father doing; for what things soever he doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner."³ What the Father does spiritually from himself, the Son of

¹ Gal. iii: 28. (R. V.)

² John v: 17.

³ John v: 19, 20. (R. V.)

man in heaven, as God's living instrument, bodies forth in a natural creation which is consummated in time — excepting alone as to the destiny of human souls. And concerning that divine commission of which Jesus Christ is the means and the fulfillment, prophecy affirms, "I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people."¹

V

The divine commission thus outlined "according to the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God"² is accomplished by One who termed himself "the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending"³ of a creative act effected through his instrumentality, to whom "all power is given"⁴ for the accomplishment of God's will. All

¹ Isa. li : 16.

² Acts ii : 23.

³ Rev. i : 8.

⁴ Matt. xxviii : 18.

of which is within the full significance of those words of Christ concerning them “unto whom the word of God came : I said ye are gods.”¹

It was within the scope of an inspired imagination to have conceived, that when God had so chosen from his celestial people—who are “without fault before his throne”²—one to whom he committed the power and the task of drawing forth a new system of worlds for the creation of new families of man, “all the sons of God shouted for joy.”³ For every new creation is the occasion for a further revelation of the inexhaustible riches of the Spirit of God, ever manifesting forth the infinite divine love and wisdom. Creation upon creation, from eternity to eternity, is the ceaseless manifestation of that which is “hid in God”⁴ until he so reveals himself in and through the soul of perfect man ; every new creation effected through his chosen instru-

¹ John x : 34, 35.

² Rev. xiv : 5.

³ Job xxxviii : 6-7.

⁴ Eph. iii : 9.

ments being eventually consummated "in the kingdom of the Father," wherein, the scripture affirms, all are "kings and priests unto God."¹

¹ Rev. i:6.

“A LITTLE LOWER THAN GOD”

I

As affirmed by ancient prophecy and confirmed by “the revelation of Jesus Christ,” the nature and destiny of perfect man transcends even the glory of the created universe, as implied in the following scripture: “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man [the individual human soul] that thou visitest him? Thou hast made him but little lower than God, and crownest him with glory and honor. . . . Thou hast put all things under his feet.”¹

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in quoting this ancient scripture with a special reference to Christ’s incarnation,

¹ Psa. viii: 3-6. (R. V.)

changes the expression “a little lower than God,” as it stands in the Hebrew, and renders it “made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death ;” that is, for his descent into the unquickened earthly state of man. But that the writer of this epistle recognized the original prophecy as referring to *man*, in an ultimate or celestial sense, is clearly implied in the following : “For in that he put all things in subjection under him [that is, under *man*], he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour.”¹ In him, therefore, may be discerned an example of that ultimate destiny reserved for man in the Heaven of heavens “when all things are fulfilled.”

¹ Heb. ii : 8, 9.

II

In the light of the revelation of human destiny in Jesus, it may be discerned that the divine purpose in creating man was not restricted to endowing him eventually with all the glories of God's heavenly kingdom, as an earthly potentate might endow his subjects with riches and honor; the destiny of man as revealed in Christ infinitely transcends this earthly conception. For in the light of Christ, God purposes to make of the created human soul a "son," by imparting to man the divine Spirit; thus the infinity and eternity of God himself is the "great inheritance" into which all are "called by Christ." And in him it is further revealed that God uses the potentiality of perfect man, to whom "all power is given,"¹ as his "hand," or instrument, for all outward creations on the plane of nature, as witnessed in him "by whom he made the worlds."² To the earthly man is eventually

¹ Matt. xxviii:18.

² Heb. i:2.

given dominance over the earth; but to the heavenly or celestial man, when grown to "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,"¹ is given "authority and power" to create those worlds in which the earthly man is formed—"according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God."² Jesus, therefore, confirms in his own experience and in his own person that scripture which affirms "of them unto whom the word of God came; I said ye are gods"—himself being the witness of that divine "word" imparted in all its fullness to the soul of man as "Son of God."

III

That Jesus manifested the indwelling Spirit as its "very image" or "form" or expression may be inferred from his words, "Whatsoever I speak, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak."³ So freely and fully does the divine Spirit gain expression through that perfected human soul that

¹ Eph. iv:13. ² Acts ii:23. ³ John xii:50.

the words “Before Abraham was, I am”¹ are the words of God himself speaking directly through the soul of man. And when betrayed in Gethsemane Jesus said, “I am. . . . As soon, then, as he had said unto them I am . . . they went backward, and fell to the ground,”² the power of indwelling divinity being felt even by those who were without spiritual discernment.³

This manifestation of the Father abiding in and speaking through the Son is not arbitrary, impairing the free will of the human *proprium*: it is a conscious “communion” or “fellowship” of the divine and the human, which belongs to the state of perfect man; it is God and man working in union of will with reciprocal affection, with free and spontaneous intercourse of soul and Spirit.

¹ John viii : 58.

² John xviii : 5-6.

³ The words as given in the text are “I am *he*,” — the last word is added in italics in every instance, having been deemed an omission.

“THE FAITH OF GOD”

I

JESUS grounds all exercise of the divine “power” in “faith” and “belief;” “all things,” he said, “are possible to him that believeth.”¹ For this power is of the divine Spirit, and the fullness of this is restricted only by the limitation of man’s faith and belief in God; for the scripture says, “God giveth not the Spirit by measure;”² and Jesus said, “According to your faith be it unto you.”³ When faith and belief are weak, the manifestation of the Spirit is correspondingly weak; for the receptive conditions are grounded in a sure conviction of the reality of the promise that the Father will “give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.”⁴ Jesus therefore but voiced

¹ Mark ix: 23.

² John iii: 34. (R. V.)

³ Matt. ix: 29.

⁴ Luke xi: 13.

his own experience of this truth when in substance he said, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed,¹ nothing can impede your will;" for the will that is united to the divine manifests "the power of God."

II

The faith that Jesus refers to is individual and personal—faith in the indwelling divine presence in them that are born of God; this was his faith. "Have the faith of God,"² he said, "and nothing shall be impossible unto you." For when the human will is united to the divine will, the power of God is put forth.

Jesus affirms his human powerlessness in the words, "Of mine own self I can do nothing.³ . . . The Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."⁴ Through faith in that indwelling divine presence Jesus wrought "works" that are deemed miracles; and "in his name, through faith

¹ Matt. xvii: 20.

² Mark xi: 22. (A. V. marg.)

³ John v: 19, 30.

⁴ John xiv: 10.

in his name,¹" his disciples did likewise. By thus laying hold of the divine, man's weakness is united to God's strength, human imperfection to the divine holiness. This is the open secret of Christ's life.

III

The gospel of Jesus Christ, his "good tidings of great joy," is much more than the deliverance of the human soul from the slaveries of sin — that is merely its earthly aspect: his tidings in their higher or affirmative teaching are a revelation of man's divine destiny; for his gospel of the Spirit "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."² For the apostle Paul says, "When called of God unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ . . . ye are enriched by him in all utterance, in all knowledge³ . . . for your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God."⁴ And it is this

¹ Acts iii : 16.

² Rom. i : 16.

³ 1 Cor. i : 5-9.

⁴ 1 Cor. vi : 19. (R. V.)

indwelling Spirit that makes perfect the imperfect ; for it is the source of all strength, of all virtue, of all purity and perfection, of all joy that endures and will not fade.

“WITH THINE OWN SELF”

I

CHRIST's teachings on the Mount mark the initial stage of his divine message to his brethren of this world: in his final prayer to the Father, at the close of his ministry, is revealed the culmination of his “good tidings”—the disclosure of man's divine destiny: “Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world . . . I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. . . . Holy Father, keep through thine own name

those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. . . . And now I come to thee ; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. . . . The glory which thou gavest me I have given them ; that they may be one, even as we are one . . . that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them.”¹

II

These words are a disclosure of that divine destiny which the followers of Christ are to share with him. A perception of this must surely enlarge the conception ultimately formed of that transcendent Being who is “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ;”² of that Eternal Spirit who is the God of gods and Father of spirits ; of whom it is affirmed that “no man hath seen, nor can see ;”³ but with whom the Son of man in heaven is in open “fellowship,” in conscious “communion.”

¹ John xvii. ² 2 Cor. xi : 31. ³ 1 Tim. vi : 16.

To the mind of this world the Spirit of God is vaguely conceived as a mystical presence ; but for the mind of Christ this is a real presence, a Being with whom he held conscious and joyful intercourse while on earth, as between Father and Son, as between friend and friend ; for the indwelling Spirit of the Son discerns the “Free Spirit” of the Father, as like discerns like.¹

¹ For those who look for specific formulas in definition, it may be said that the “Free Spirit” is the Father, — “Thou wilt uphold me with thy Free Spirit” (Psa. li: 12), — the Spirit indwelling the soul of perfect man with “all the fulness of the Godhead,” is the Son, and that human soul glorified in its celestial state as “the spirit of Jesus” is the Holy Ghost. The Spirit indwelling the soul of perfect man is “of one substance with the Father” and is “very God of [or from] very God.” The Holy Ghost is from the Father as to the indwelling Spirit, and from the Son as to the glorified human soul of Jesus. The triune nature of the divine manifestation is thus made known to the human understanding as a truth of Revelation made apprehensible to the minds of the immediate followers of Christ as the ground of their spiritual enlightenment.

“WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM”

I

APART from the revelation of human destiny in Jesus Christ, man's conceptions of his ultimate future cannot rise above the earthly experience or its analogies. The knowledge of that which is “hid with Christ in God”¹ is revealed to the spiritual by the Spirit.² In the light of Revelation that earthly life of man of which Nature is the mould and Science the interpreter, is discerned to be but a span on an endless path of progress, which passes through the heavens³ and mounts to the unveiled Presence of God, where man is affirmed to be void of all imperfection even when judged by a divine standard.⁴

Discerning in Christ the overwhelming

¹ Col. iii : 3.

² 1 Cor. ii : 10.

³ Heb. iv : 14.

⁴ Rev. xiv : 5.

greatness of human destiny, St. John exclaims, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."¹ Incapable as the human mind is, in the earthly life, for apprehending the full significance of the revelation, the apostle adds, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."² So great, indeed, is the variance between this present stage of life and that ultimate heavenly state of perfect man as revealed in Jesus, that the mind of this world finds it difficult to reconcile the two as constituting the beginning and the ending of one continuous path of human progress.

II

It may be inferred, in the light of Revelation, that human destiny will find its ful-

¹ 1 John iii:1.

² 1 John iii: 2, 3.

fillment in the form of an infinitely diversified "heavenly host" of perfected human souls, glorified by the indwelling Presence of God. For as the forming experience has been in the creation of each separate soul from its initial earthly stage to that perfected heavenly consummation in "the kingdom of the Father"—as revealed in Christ—so will its individuality be marked in that celestial state as in the earthly life, revealing the inexhaustible fullness of God's love and the infinitude of his creative power. The apostle Paul likens this individuality of perfected human souls to the distinctions in the heavenly bodies, even "as one star differeth from another star in glory;"¹ and Jesus says of that heavenly consummation, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."²

¹ 1 Cor. xv: 41-49. (R. V.)

² Matt. xiii: 43.

II

Not through speculative conjecture was this knowledge of human destiny acquired by man, but by a revelation of the truth in Jesus Christ, who said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world; that I should bear witness unto the truth."¹ And St. John says, "The life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us. That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write unto you, that your joy may be full."²

IV

The advanced thought of the time is now largely occupied with questions concerning

¹ John xviii: 37.

² 1 John i: 2-4.

man's origin and destiny, studied almost exclusively in the light of Nature. In marked contrast with the acquisitions of empirical science or of speculative philosophy stands the revelation of human destiny in Jesus Christ. He who said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full,"¹ implies therein that he is himself a manifestation of "the way and the truth and the life" in all that concerns human destiny. Can it be doubted then that his "good tidings," in their affirmative form, are a means of implanting in the human heart, through love and gratitude to God, a nobler motive and a stronger impulse for hastening the divine consummation of human destiny than any merely repressive means could effect through moral restraint alone? St. Paul says, "All the promises of God in him are yea" — that is, affirmations of truth — "and in him Amen, unto the glory of God."² Christ holds up be-

¹ John xv: 11. (R. V.)

² 2 Cor. i: 19, 20.

fore the mind and heart of man that which appeals to the nobler part of human nature, that which lifts man above the earth and transfigures the meanest things of the present, when he says, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."¹

¹ Matt. xxv: 34.

CONCLUSION

THE foregoing statement, comprised in Part II of this treatise, is an interpretation of the revelation of human destiny as the truth is affirmed by "the word of prophecy" and manifested in "Jesus, the Christ." Its aim is confined to the elucidation of a single great truth of Christ's message of "good tidings;" namely, the destiny of man. Some of the conceptions, as therein expressed, may be unfamiliar to those who may not have studied the subject carefully, but in varied forms they are all as old as the Christian faith; if they were not, this would be just ground for doubting their verity. The preexistence of Christ; the nature and personality of the Paraclete; and God's creation of the world through "perfect man," are all truths of Revelation that have been apprehended with more or less clearness since the time of the Apostles; while the

gradualness of the perfecting of the human soul in passing through many states of being has engaged the thought of Christian minds in all ages. Origen long ago expressed the thought, derived from Revelation, that there is "an advance in man, so that from his being first an animal being, and not understanding what belongs to the Spirit of God, he reaches eventually to the stage of being made a spiritual being, and of judging all things . . . ascending through those mansions, so to speak, in the various places which the Greeks term spheres, but in the Holy Scriptures are called heavens, and thus passing through all gradations, following Him who hath passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God." And of that final state wherein God is all in all, he adds: God "will be all in each individual in this way . . . that all the individual can either feel, or understand, or think, will be wholly God; and he will no longer hold or retain anything else than God, who will be the measure and standard of all his acts. . . .

This result must be understood as brought about, not suddenly but slowly and gradually . . . during the lapse of countless ages, some outstripping others and tending by a swifter course toward perfection . . . through numerous and countless orders of progressive beings.”¹

Of the preëxistent Christ certain of the Church Fathers, as well as spiritual teachers in all ages, have written with more or less clearness in the light of Revelation: the earnest inquirer will find a considerable literature on this subject. Concerning the nature and personality of the Holy Ghost, from Justin Martyr down to the spiritual-minded Rothe of to-day, the conception as herein stated, has been apprehended in whole or in part, notwithstanding the preference usually accorded a purely metaphysical statement which throws all the emphasis on the indwelling Spirit common to the several phases of divine manifestation, without attempt-

¹ *De Principiis.*

ing to distinguish the nature of personality.

The earnest seeker after truth, while respecting the acquisitions of the past, will never be content to accept as final the interpretations of a former time, the product of minds equally fallible with the mind of to-day. In theology, as in science, while the acquisition of a body of truth necessitates the jealous guardianship of former conquests, the product of even the best thought of the past must, with the advance of mind, ever be subject to critical revision. Many of the most careful inquirers, studying Revelation anew, have found that some of the rejected conceptions of former times have contained much truth, but more or less distorted by a misplaced emphasis, the controverting of which has sometimes led to formal definitions not wholly acceptable to the modern mind.

Concerning the nature of a creator, or of One "by whom God made the worlds," the vague conception of a demiurge arises

from time to time, in various forms, as though it belonged to the necessities of human thought. Paley, in his "Natural Religion"—arguing from the evidence of design in nature for the existence of God—incidentally gives expression to the following : "One being may have fixed certain rules, and, if we may so speak, provided certain materials, and afterwards have committed to another being, out of these materials, and in subordination to these rules, the task of drawing forth a creation. . . . Nay, there may be many such agents, and many ranks of these." This he regarded as quite compatible with human reason and not foreign to his argument. But the apostle Paul had no uncertain conception in mind, derived from Revelation, when he said, "God created all things by Jesus Christ ;" whom yet he affirmed to be "perfect man" and Son of God : "God in Christ" as Creator, Saviour, and Sanctifier ; from whom, through whom, and unto whom are all things.

Whatever may be the ultimate destiny of

human life in this world when the will of God is done on earth as in heaven, that future is not ours ; for the individual human soul, after its brief earthly experience, passes into another world and eventually, when purified and perfected, ascends to that celestial realm wherein God is "all in all." The ultimate destiny of human life on this earth, therefore, presents another and distinct question not considered in this treatise. It is with the ultimate destiny of the individual human soul in the world to come that this interpretation of Revelation is concerned ; for the destiny of the individual is the destiny of the race, and the perfecting of the race is spiritually neither more nor less than the perfecting of the individuals comprised in the race. It is to the individual, therefore, that the Gospel of Christ makes its first and last appeal ; for the spiritual well-being of social solidarity can only be promoted and fulfilled by that means.

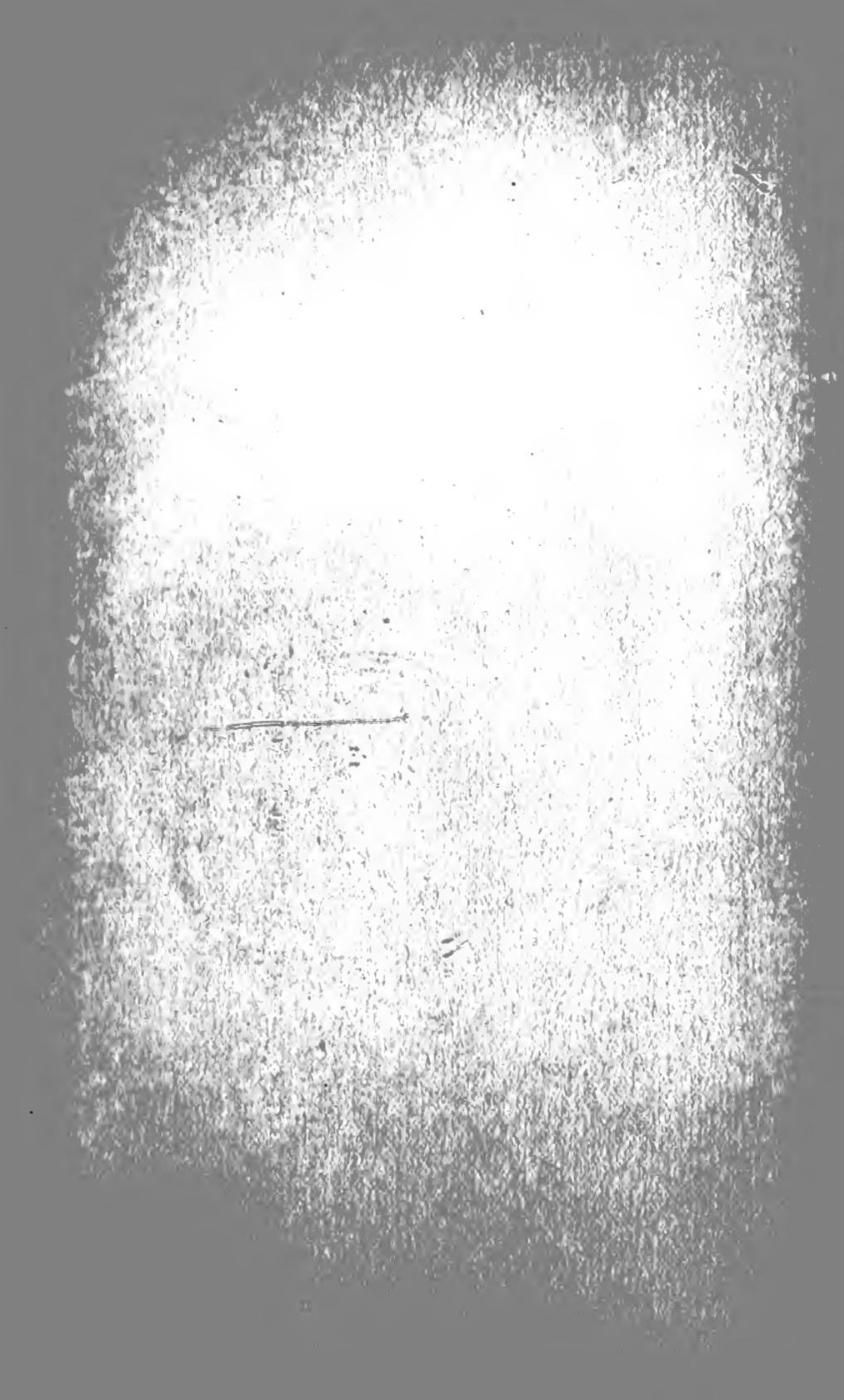
According to the quality of that human nature which is manifested in the individual,

therefore, may we judge of the character of a people ; and in like manner we may judge of the character of that celestial "people of God," in the Heaven of heavens, through the revelation and manifestation of "the Son of man in heaven" — this is the root principle of the exposition herein given of the revelation of human destiny in Jesus Christ. Once clearly apprehended that the whole nature and destiny of perfect man is included in the revelation, then the sacredness and significance of every step and stage of that life which is gradually moving forward under a divine guidance to the accomplishment of God's purpose in creating man, becomes manifest.



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